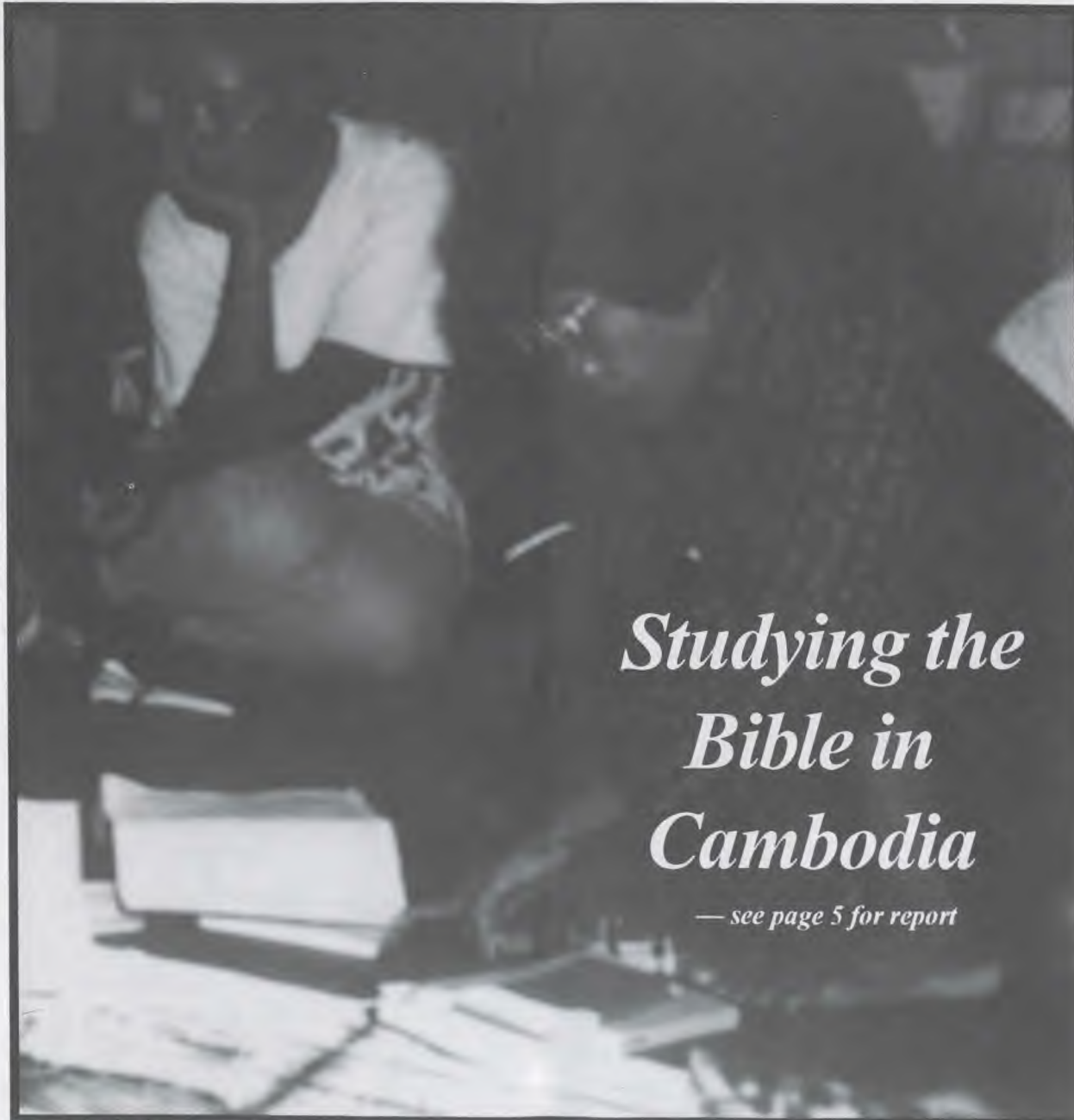


SOUTHEAST ASIA UNION *Messenger*

ISSN 0026-0371

M.I.T.A. (P) No. 138/5/92

Nov-Dec 1992



Studying the Bible in Cambodia

— see page 5 for report

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year

The phrase is so common it rolls off the ears without ringing any bells. "Have a merry Christmas." And often we attach to it "Happy New Year."

As a boy growing up in the United States these two holidays were my favorites because they came just a week apart, and that meant a long school holiday.

But why do these two holidays fall so close together? In ancient Rome the new year began on December 21, but Julius Caesar changed it to January 1. For most of history though, the Christian world observed March 25 as New Year's Day. In Anglo-Saxon England December 25 was the day the year began, but William the Conqueror declared January 1 as New Year's Day to coincide with his coronation. Later England joined the rest of the Christian world in celebrating March 25 as the start of the new year. Pope Gregory XIII instituted the Gregorian Calendar in 1582, and at that time declared January 1 to be New Year's Day, but only Catholic countries accepted the date. The rest of the Western world finally accepted January 1 in the 18th century. From Europe the Western calendar spread throughout the world.

As most people know, the date for Christmas is not based on the actual birth date of Jesus Christ. Rather, the pagan Romans celebrated December 25 as the birthday of the sun because days began to grow longer about then. Christians adopted it for the birthday of God's Son many centuries after the birth of Christ.

Similarly, the ancient Roman New Year's Day (December 21) was based on the date when, in the northern hemisphere, days began to grow longer and people's hope for another spring, another planting and harvesting time, was renewed. Changing the date to January 1 in the Julian and Gregorian calendars was no doubt chiefly a matter of convenience.

Thus the dates for Christmas and New Year's Day both center around the idea of renewal, starting over, a promise for the future.

Some Christians argue that we should not celebrate Christ's birth on a date that originally belonged to a pagan holiday. But instead of quibbling over dates, we might gain more by pointing out that both Christmas and New Year's Day serve an important human need.

Everyone who has lived more than a few years has

some regrets. "I wish I would have . . ." or "I wish I had never . . .". We all make mistakes. We all fail to do the right thing at some time. And when we've failed we need a chance to start over again.

God understands this. That is why He makes forgiveness available to us. He recognizes that we all need to have a clean slate to write on.

A new year is like a clean slate. We can try to write a better history with each new year.

Even more important is the gift of God's Son to the world. It is the birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus that make forgiveness—the clean slate—available to us.

If it were not for that birth in Bethlehem nearly 2000 years ago, each new year would be just one more period of drudgery to fulfill in an endless cycle of drudgeries. If Jesus had not come to earth, the doctrine of Buddha—that life is nothing but suffering that we ought to try to escape—would be correct.

But because Jesus came to earth—and because He remained true to His heavenly mission right up to His death—life need not be an endless cycle of suffering. There is hope for true new life. There is hope for an eternal new year when all suffering and pain will be wiped away by God Himself.

As we prepare for the new year, let us resolve to take full advantage of the grace that Jesus makes available to make it a happy year.

More than that: let us resolve that the forgiving grace of Jesus Christ will be the watchword of our lives—the motive force behind our dealings with our neighbors, our family, even our enemies. There is no sin too great to be forgiven except the sin of one who will not seek forgiveness. When we look at that innocent babe in the manger, when we see the nail-scarred hands of our Saviour, let us fall down and worship Him. And let us leave behind every encumbrance, every grudge, every hatred, every drop of anger that would keep us from passing on to the world the grace and forgiveness that Jesus came to give.

If we do that, we will have a truly merry Christmas, and a happy new year.

—Kenneth R. Wade,
Ministerial Secretary, SAUM

The Changing Scene in Russia

Scene 1: Sabbath morning, 1935, in the closed, arms-manufacturing city of Tula, about 100 miles (160 km) south of Moscow. An Adventist minister, Pastor Peter Kulakov, had been snatched from his family and imprisoned for preaching God's Word. Now he gazed through the bars waiting for a glimpse of his dear wife and 3 sons (one was to become a minister, Elder M. P. Kulakov). He knew they would walk by the prison on their way to church. When they passed by, his heart broken by the bars that kept him from his family, Elder Kulakov held his arms in a large circle symbolically holding his family close to his breast.

Scene 2: Another prison courtyard in Kazakhstan on a Sabbath morning in 1952. Elder M. P. Kulakov sat squatting on the ground, arms handcuffed behind him. Guards had found the hiding place to which he had fled in an attempt to keep the Sabbath. During the punishment the public address blared a popular song of the day whose lyrics cynically asked, "Could there be any land on earth in which the air breathes more freedom?"

Scene 3: Back to Tula. Now it is Sunday, Nov. 22, 1992. Young Peter Kulakov (Euro-Asia Division Media Center Director, named after his grandfather) led his staff, local and visiting church leaders (including George Vandeman, Ted N.C. Wilson, AWR's Allen Steele, and many others) in dedicating the building housing the new Media Center and Russian Union offices. What a contrast. A few blocks from where Elder Kulakov Sr. suffered in prison for preaching the gospel, here we were inaugurating a media center dedicated to that very purpose!

Our daily and weekly radio programs today are broadcast, not only over every one of the AM and FM stations in Russia, but also, in a system unique to former communist states, transmitted by cable directly into over 90% of all the homes and apartments in the entire country! Additionally, the Russian language version of *It Is Written* is broadcast, weekly in prime-time, over 40 television stations to an audience of 120 million! The Center receives 500 letters per day and over 15,000 are enrolled in the Bible Correspondence School. Yes indeed, what hath God wrought!

— Robert S. Folkenberg,
General Conference President

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for Former U.S.S.R.

First Sabbath School Mission Offering Since 1927

"Why do you close the doors? For 70 years they have kept the Word of God from us, and now you are closing the doors."

These words came from a man with tear-filled eyes who was turned away from the Adventist evangelistic meetings underway in the Kremlin Palace. Who turned him and hundreds of others away? Not the Adventists, but the building administrators who feared for the safety of the people. Every seat was filled and every aisle packed during Mark Finley's second campaign in Moscow — 12,000 people every night. The 90 evangelistic campaigns since 1990 have been largely responsible for the increase the division's membership from 35,000 at the collapse of communism to the present membership of 70,000.

The former president of the Euro-Asia Division, Michael Kulakov, says, "Could I ever have imagined in 1948 [when he was aboard a prisoners' train headed for a labor camp in Siberia] that in Moscow in 1992 we would have four large congregations with about 3,000 members?" And, "Could I ever have thought the day would come when we would have access to the Kremlin Palace to preach the gospel?"



Adventist literature being sold to Soviet people in 1990, the first time since 1928. Bible-hungry crowds have been observed tearing individual pages out of their Bibles to share with others still waiting in line when Bibles being distributed ran out.

Kulakov remembers the faith of his uncle who believed such turnabouts would happen. After his uncle's release from 25 years of hard labor for editing an Adventist magazine in the 1920s, he showed his nephew the Soviet television tower and radio antennas and told him. "All this is built in this country by atheists and communists for one purpose, but God will use these facilities for proclamation of truth."

True to his prediction, Adventist World Radio is using the equipment to broadcast to Russia and surrounding countries, and *It is Written* is aired on Moscow television.

"Nothing can prevent the fulfillment of those precious promises which are given to the people of God," Kulakov continues. "Who could prevent the falling of the Berlin Wall when its time had come? Who could prevent the fall of the atheistic regime which resisted the proclamation of the gospel? How suddenly these obstacles collapsed!"

How will the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering on December 19 help to proclaim the message in a clear and distinct way? In many more ways than you can imagine, for the currency stretches very far in the Euro-Asia Division. Your offering will provide a school, four evangelistic centers, four medical centers, and greenhouses for the seminary's vegetable gardens.

— Janet Leigh Kangas,
Department of Church Ministries,
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

New Treasurer Arrives

Thomas J and Dorothy Massengill have arrived to fill the vacancy left by the Tom and Karen Staples. The Massengills come as a team, and are here on a six-year call. Before coming to Singapore, Tom worked as the treasure of the Indiana Conference. After 12 years of service for the conference, Tom and Dottie decided to accept God's call to work in the mission field. "I accepted this call to the mission field because I get to share my talents and I also get to learn. I am interested in learning how other cultures deal with finances," said Tom. Tom has worked for 28 years in treasury and enjoys what he does. "I like to help others keep their finances straight. I feel good when I help someone to see a problem and help them grow from it," he said.

As the new treasurer for the Union Tom has some key goals. "I want to get all of the missions on a sound financial base of self-support. I would like to see our colleges and hospitals with up-to-date facilities and



The Massengill family.

equipment that meet with current standards. That way our Adventist institutions will be thought of highly," he said.

The Massengills did a lot of deliberating about coming to Singapore. "One of my concerns about coming was that Tom's and my parents are getting older," said Dottie. The realization that this is where God wants them came to Dottie in the garden. "I was weeding one day in my garden when it just dawned on me, God wants me to be in Singapore," she said.

Part of Tom's life in and out of the office involves sports. Tom graduated from Andrews University with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education and Business. When you walk into his office you notice three things: a miniature bicycle on the left hand corner of his desk, a golf clock on the wall, and a pin board filled with patches from bicycle excursions he has ridden in.

His love for biking came from his son Tim, 24. "When Tim was in about the 6th or 7th grade I asked him to come up with something that he was interested in doing with his friends, and that I could do with him. He came up with the idea of going on a bike trip. So I asked one of the other fathers, and we went on a one week bike camping trip," said Tom.

Dottie loves to sew. While sitting in her home chatting about their family, I watched her making a christening gown. We began to talk about sewing and why she was making the gown. "When my mom was young she never had a lot of nice things, and one of the things she liked was baby dolls. So before I left for Singapore I went out and bought her a baby doll. She loved it. So for a Christmas present I decided to make a christening gown for the doll," said Dottie. I noticed the ornate yet simple design of the gown. The beading and lace accentuated the overall texture.

Dottie graduated from Atlantic Union College with a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics and Business

Education. Dottie plans to teach remedial English at Southeast Asia Union College in the coming school year.

With two young adults, Tim 24 and Denita 22, graduating from Andrews in June of next year, their family is complete. "I see Singapore as a real challenge, because it's exciting to get to learn about a new culture," said Dottie.

— *Lauren Johnson,*
Communication Assistant, SAUM

New Physicians at Youngberg



Dr. and Mrs. Kent Howard Van Arsdell.

Dr. Kent Howard Van Arsdell, M.D., a specialist in internal medicine, arrived recently from the United States with his wife Joan. A graduate of Loma Linda University Medical School with a Doctor of Medicine degree, Dr. Van Arsdell completed his residency program at Kettering

Medical Center in Ohio in 1991 and is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine. He loves mission service because as a child his father served as a physician at Phuket Mission Hospital in Thailand.



Dr. Andrew Tang.

The new Resident Medical Officer is Dr. Andrew Tang, M.B.,B.S. Dr. Tang graduated from the National University of Singapore in 1984. He completed his housemanship program at Toa Payoh Hospital and Singapore General Hospital. According to Dr. Tang, he was born at Youngberg Adventist Hospital and has great admiration for the medical profession. Dr. Tang was raised in an Adventist family where his parents are active lay people at the local church. He is glad to be given the opportunity to serve in this church-operated hospital.

The hospital administration welcomes both Dr. Van Arsdell and Dr. Tang to hospital ministry in Singapore.

— *Jonathan Ng, Public Relations Director, YAH*

■ CAMBODIA ■

Worshipping in a Miracle House

On the cover of this issue of Messenger is a photo of a Cambodian woman sitting on the floor, reading her Bible. The photo was taken during the regular church service in the home of a woman named Sovanna. But without a series of miracles the photo could never have been taken and the woman probably would never have had a Bible to read.

The real beginning of miracles came when Dr. Charles

Tidwell moved to Phnom Penh in early 1991 to open an ADRA office. Dr. Tidwell worked both as ADRA administrator and also as church administrator for several months. But during those early months he was unable to make much progress in developing interests. Then in August Thy San Sam, a Cambodian who is working as a pastor in the United States, volunteered to come and visit Cambodia. During his three-week visit he was able to

locate friends and relatives of many Adventist Cambodians. Sovanna was among those he met.

Sovanna, who lives about 15 km south of Phnom Penh, had received many letters from her sister Sivandeth, who became an Adventist while living in a refugee camp in Thailand. When Sivandeth moved from Thailand to France, she continued writing to her sister, sharing the gospel with her and encouraging her to become a Christian. But at that time there was no Adventist church in Cambodia.

When Pastor Sam found Sovanna and brought her to meet Dr. Tidwell, Sovanna became very excited to know that at last she could study the Bible with someone close to her home. She became one of the most faithful members attending church services in the Tidwells' home, and would often come to visit during the week to have Mrs. Tidwell teach her children's songs that she could use in sharing the gospel with young people in her neighborhood.

When Dr. Tidwell visited her home, Sovanna showed him a pile of lumber and announced that she was going to build a new home and dedicate it as a place to worship God. A few weeks later that lumber had been converted into a comfortable home. But only one corner is reserved for living quarters. The remainder belongs to God, and 30 or more people meet there to study their Bibles and worship God each week.

I often wondered where this faithful lady found the money to construct the house. A recent letter from her sister in France revealed the story of the miracle behind that money. Sivandeth wrote that her sister had requested



The Miracle House.

money from her to build the house. Sivandeth admitted that at first she felt this was too great a burden because she was unemployed at the time and building the house would take all the money she had managed to put into savings. Nonetheless she sent the money to Cambodia.

In her letter she explained how God made up that amount to her through unexpected payments received from the French government — the money was restored to her plus a small amount more.

God is working miracles to make the gospel available to the people of Cambodia. Please continue to pray for this newly opened field, for Satan is also working hard there to drive the country back into warfare.

— *Kenneth R. Wade,*
Global Mission Coordinator, SAUM.

■ PENINSULAR MALAYSIA ■

It Happened in Penang — 42 Decisions for Christ

Geoffrey Youlden, South Pacific Division evangelist and media presenter, conducted a series of evangelistic meetings in the Penang Adventist Hospital Chapel. Because of his effort 42 people indicated their desire to be baptized.

The church and hospital combined to conduct the evangelistic series. Each night the lecture hall was full. The last night had many more in attendance than the first night.

Subjects

The opening subject, "Life After Death", attracted a crowd made up of Buddhists, Christians, and free thinkers. Each night Pastor Youlden covered another phase of "present truth" such as the Signs of Christ's Coming, The Three Angels' Messages, The Sabbath, and the Anti-Christ, the 2,300 Days, Health, and why there are so many denominations. On Sabbath 3 people were baptized.

Over 60 non-Adventists attended the Sabbath service, followed by a vegetarian lunch.



Baptismal candidates (l-r) Tang Su See, Marcia Khoo, Tracy Chen with Pastor Youlden.

Follow-up

Following the Penang meetings a Revelation Seminar will be held each week in the church and in certain homegroups around the city.

Mr. Joe Chapman came with Dr. Youlden to help organize a plan of operation so that each interest could be instructed on the great prophecies of Revelation. Mr. Chapman is from the Trans-Tasman Union Conference where he serves as the Resource Center Manager for Revelation seminars. Mr. Chapman met with church members and instructed them on how to conduct a Revelation Seminar. "It is the best way to follow up the series that I know of," said one church member. Mr. Chapman also visited headquarters in Singapore, Bangkok, and Kuala Lumpur to explain the seminars to both ministers and lay people. It is hoped in the near future that Revelation Seminars will commence in many areas.

Pastor Youlden will be making a return visit in January 1993. Another baptism is planned as well as another all-day Sabbath seminar.

"There are many people just waiting to be gathered in. This series in Penang has again highlighted that the church must make the winning of souls to Christ its first priority," said Pastor Youlden.

— *Dr William Laspe,*
President, PAH

Indian Evangelist Visits Malaysia

Dr. John Willmott, President of the South India Union of Seventh-day Adventists, spent one-and-one-half months conducting evangelistic meetings and revivals in the Peninsular Malaysia Mission. He arrived on September 12 and returned to India on October 30.

Dr. Willmott conducted evangelistic meetings in Penang, Ipoh, Teluk Intan, and Selangor. In Selangor District the evangelistic meeting was held in Shah Alam, the capital of Selangor. The meetings, held during the Deepavali Festival time, an important festivals for the Hindus, were attended well in spite of the festive season. All those attending the meetings expressed their gratitude to the Peninsular Malaysia Mission for making arrangements to call Dr. Willmott.

— *Benjamin Paramiah,*
Church Ministries/Ministerial Department, PEM

Hospital Ministry Sees Results

The Hospital Ministry team at Penang Adventist Hospital is made up largely of young people who work at the hospital and volunteer extra hours of service to share their faith. The group conducts Sabbath worship services in the hospital chapel and conducts a sunshine ministry on Sabbath afternoon, visiting, singing, and praying in patients' rooms. Their ministry recently bore fruit in three baptisms, and this has encouraged them and given them new enthusiasm to continue their work.

Bala Chandran, who was raised in a Hindu family, came to know about Christianity at the hospital. Sudin, a nurse, shared her faith with him. When he began to express interest in being baptized, his father became angry and eventually disowned him. But this did not deter Bala. He stood firm and was baptized in Penang English Church. Now he has joined the Hospital Ministry team and preaches regularly during the sunshine band outreach.

Chiang Tatt Oon works in the hospital. His girlfriend Rhona, a nurse, encouraged him to attend the Hospital Ministry service. When he expressed interest, David Ang began giving him Bible studies. After studying for some time, he was baptized in Penang Chinese Church. Now he too serves with the Hospital Ministry team, helping to set up the chapel for services and fetching patients from their rooms.

When Marcia Neoh was a patient in the hospital two years ago, she happened to be warded with Anenchi, a nurse. They became friends and Mrs. Neoh noticed that Anenchi read her Bible and prayed every morning. When she asked about it Anenchi shared her faith. Later, when Marcia's son was sick, he was treated by PAH pediatrician Dr. Chew, who invited her to attend Sabbath services at the hospital.

After studying the Bible with Chaplain James Wah and Mrs. Hannah Lai, Marcia made her decision to accept Jesus as her Saviour, and was baptized into the Penang English Church. Now she also assists with Hospital Ministry work on Sabbath and her husband is taking Bible studies.

Hospital Ministry touches many lives. And the lives of those who minister are often touched and blessed as well.

— Bernadette, Secretary, Hospital Ministry, PAH

Graduates of Neonatal Intensive Care, PAH

October 18 was a special day for 22 babies and their parents who participated in a party at the Penang Adventist Hospital lecture hall. The party was to celebrate with these special babies who were born prematurely and had been cared for in the neonatal intensive care unit. Premature birth weights range from 1-4 pounds and most babies stay in the intensive care from 1 to 8 weeks.

It was an inspiring and rewarding afternoon for the nurses and doctors who had put in hours caring for these tiny babies, to see them now crawling and toddling around.

The neonatal care unit at PAH is constantly being upgraded to meet increasing demands. Last year PAH had 121 deliveries.

— Valerie Chu, Health Education Department, PAH

■ SABAH ■

Highlights of 1991

The year 1992 has seen strong lay involvement in all aspects of the church's work in Sabah. At the end of February a team from the Far Eastern Division and SAUM came to Tamparuli to encourage lay involvement in Global Mission. More than 500 delegates from churches throughout the Mission faithfully attended the meetings and then returned to their churches to spread the enthusiasm for outreach. Global Mission is on the move in Sabah, and lay members, students, and teachers have even gone far into the jungle to newly discovered villages to conduct character building classes.

May 30 was World Baptism Day, and all ordained ministers were assigned to conduct baptisms. Due to the lack of ministers, some baptisms had to be postponed to later dates. The total number of baptisms on May 30 was 210, and most of these were the product of lay involvement in outreach.

The Church Ministries Department held a singles retreat at the Mission's new retreat center near Kinabalu National Park in April. In August the same department

conducted a special retreat for young adults who were engaged or planning to be engaged soon.

From June 20 to July 4 Pastor Bobby Sepang, Stewardship Director of the Far Eastern Division, conducted evangelistic meetings in Tamparuli. The meetings reaped 184 baptisms from among people who had already been taking Bible studies.

In June ADRA Sabah commenced a multi-project at the newly entered remote village of Kipopogong. The objectives of this project are to: 1. Install a water system for the villagers. 2. Build a meeting place and a model house. 3. Aid in relocating the village. 4. Present health talks and agriculture lectures. 5. Build sanitation facilities and instruct the people regarding proper use of such facilities.

Sixteen students and two teachers from Walla Walla College assisted in this project which is financed by ADRA International. Elder R. S. Watts, Director of ADRA International brought a group of church administrators from the United States to visit this project.

In August the Ministerial Association organized a series of seminars to train lay pastors for their church duties. Pastor Dan Walter, president of Sarawak Mission, assisted with the training.

At the end of October the pastoral staff and the teachers brought their families to a joint retreat at the new retreat center. Pastor Kenneth Wade, SAUM Ministerial Secretary, spoke on Adventist eschatology and current prophetic fulfillments and also gave several hours of instruction in pastoral work. Dr. Edmund Siagian, Union Education Department Director, spoke to the teachers about the integration of faith and learning, classroom management, and how to improve the school climate. Dr. Charles Gaban, Sabah Mission President, spoke to the teachers about marketing Adventist education and also conducted several question and answer sessions. The ministers' wives also had special meetings at the retreat, where they discussed team ministry under the leadership of Mrs. Connie Gaban and had practical demonstrations of vegetarian cooking and dress making.

1992 has been a year of progress in Sabah, and we thank the Lord for His leading.

— Charles Gaban, President SAB

SASS Students Teach Character Development in Remote Villages

Two groups of students from Sabah Adventist Secondary school went to remote areas to conduct character building classes for children during the school holidays. A group of seven students, under the leadership of teacher Mr. Melson Lukas, went to Togop Laut (Lampaki), where there is only one Adventist family living. At first this group received a cold reception. Leaders of another religious group told the villagers to forbid their children to attend the meetings. But at the end of the ten days of classes 12 children had qualified to graduate.

Another group of 12 SASS students, under the leadership of Mr. Golden Banda, faced a real endurance test on their trip. First they rode for five hours over bumpy roads, then they had to trek into the jungle, carrying their belongings and provisions. Often they

found themselves searching about for signs of the trail that seemed to have disappeared. They struggled up steep embankments and slid down slippery slopes, waded streams, and kept on walking through the thick undergrowth—always watchful for the dreaded slimy jungle leeches.

When they finally arrived at Misusurud, they received a warm welcome. Then they discovered that there actually are two villages called Misururud, about a 30-minute walk apart. Residents of both villages sent their children to the classes, so the classes yielded 29 graduates.

The second village, known as Misururud Laut, is a completely pagan village. No outside religious group had ever reached it. While doing community work with the villagers, the team discovered that the god the people worshiped was a dirty looking bottle with some dark liquid in it. The bottle was suspended between two poles.

The gospel candle was lighted very briefly in the two villages of Misururud. The people are thankful, but they are not satisfied. They want more light. But students and teachers can make the trip only during school holidays.

— Charles Gaban, President SAB

GASS Mission Outreach

Students and faculty from Goshen Adventist Secondary School conducted Vacation Bible classes and health lectures in two villages during the mid-year school break. School Principal, Mr. Daniel Bagah, took a team to Kotud, while teachers Mr. Washington Laung and Mr. Hilary Long led a group to Luba Pelumpong. Both teams involved themselves in community assistance work as well as teaching.

The majority of the people in the villages the teams worked in are illiterate, and most of the children are undernourished. The favorite pastime of the adults is chewing betel nuts and drinking rice wine.

These outreach programs helped to make the villagers aware that there is a better way of life, and that there is Someone who cares about them and can help them improve their lives.

— Messenger Staff

■ SARAWAK ■

Triennial Session in Sarawak

The Sarawak Seventh-day Adventist Mission held its triennial session over the weekend of October 30 — November 1. President Daniel Walter presented his final report to the session. Pastor Walter and his wife Dorothy have served in Sarawak for nearly 10 years and are required by immigration laws to depart from the country before the end of 1993. They have accepted a call to move to Cambodia, where Pastor Walter will serve as church administrator. No official mission office has been established there yet so the Walters will be doing pioneer mission work.

Highlights of the years 1990-1992 included an evangelistic series held by Pastor Bobby Sepang that led to 114 baptisms. Each year Mission officers and

departmental personnel have visited nearly every district to conduct a camp meeting. New work has been begun in Jelupang (Roban), Rakut (Lubok Antu), Nanga Selalai (Tatau), Klait (Sebuyau), and Bau Town. Most of this new work has been started by dedicated lay people.

Five new churches were built during the triennium, and 23 churches or jungle chapels were replaced with new buildings. A new mission office building was opened on December 5, 1990. The mission schools have shown steady enrollment growth and have begun to emphasize practical education to help students to be better able to earn a living in a competitive world.

— Messenger Staff

■ THAILAND ■

Highlights of 1992

Thailand Adventist Mission's theme in 1992 was "We Are Expecting GREAT things in Thailand. GREAT is an acronym for Gospel Reaching Every Area of Thailand." After a year of GREAT happenings, the mission has selected a new theme for 1993: "We Are *Experiencing* GREAT Things in Thailand."

Sakolnakorn, one of our Global Mission areas, experienced GREAT things in 1992. Ekarat, a literature evangelist, was stationed there to open new work. As a result of his work we have an established company in Sakolnakorn and satellite companies around the area.

In 1990 a new work was established in the Kamphaeng Phet area, and this year we have seen exciting results there in answer to our prayers. Several of our mission leaders visited Pastor Sookjai there, and while they were in Kamphaeng Phet they received word of some Christians in a nearby village who wanted to know more about the Sabbath. When they visited this village, the pastor of the local church challenged them with the idea that if the Seventh-day Adventist Church was really God's remnant church, we should have power over demons.

Our staff soon learned the reason for this challenge. A woman in the village had been locked up in a tool shed for three years because the villagers believed she was demon possessed. The other Christians had prayed for her, but with no results. The pastor challenged our group to pray for her as a test. Pastor Chamee, Miss Rianthong, and Pastor Sookjai, along with others went to the shed and sang and prayed. To open the door they had to break off the rusted padlock. Inside they found the woman naked and unable to stand, but apparently free of demons. She is now living with the local pastor and learning to know Jesus as her Saviour. Needless to say there is a great interest in our message in that village now, both among Christians and non-Christians. Pastor Sookjai and others are following up on this interest.

During this year we have also been able to reestablish contact with a rural church inside Laos in the Nam Yawn area. Pastor Veerachai was able to locate quite a number of Adventists living in this area, but their church had been destroyed. This year we were able to assist them in rebuilding the church, and now 20 to 25 families meet there for worship every Sabbath.

Our educational work also moved forward in the past year. The Adventist English School received government recognition and full accreditation. It is now called Ekamai International School. Several other schools are also making progress toward government recognition. Mission College is still in need of strong financial support as it continues its work of training our young people.

In many areas our church members have become involved in small-group ministry, meeting together, praying and studying, and then going out and visiting missing members to encourage them to return to the church. The results have been most heartening.

We are indeed experiencing GREAT things in Thailand. The challenges are great as well. But so is our God.

— W. Steve Bassham, President, TAM

So Long

One ordinary 3x5 photo of a woman living in central Thailand. A 65 year-old woman, emaciated, unable to sit, stand or walk, lying on the filth-encrusted floor of a 6x10 foot metal shack, half naked with matted hair. Three years earlier a padlock had been put on that shack to keep this woman in. In three years the lock had never come off. Now, three years later, the door opened for Ms. Nom to see another human face.

About sixty kilometers from the city of Kamphaeng Phet, in the central region of Thailand, lies the village of Seloopat. Within the village is a now-empty galvanized metal hut with old election posters hanging from the eaves. Inside is an old red and yellow linoleum mat with bowls and cups scattered across it. A bamboo mat screen splits a small bathing/bathroom area off from the rest of the hut. This is where Ms. Nom spent the last three years of her life. Ms. Nom was possessed by demons that drove her mad. Her frightened sister, unable to help her and fearful of the demons, locked her into that hut - feeding her by means of slipping food in through a small slot. Knowledge of the life or death of Ms. Nom was conveyed only through her howls and screams.

The Kamphaeng Phet church members, led by Lay Pastor Sookjai Boonma, have been reaching out to the surrounding villages. As a result Pastor Sookjai Boonma was asked by a Sunday church pastor in Seloopat to study the principle of the Sabbath and other doctrines. Pastor Chamee, Thailand Mission Personal Ministries Director, and Ms. Rianthong, Mission Sabbath School



Ms. Nom "So Long" after the group released her from the tool shed getting a haircut from Ms. Rianthong.

Director, were in Kamphaeng Phet for this study. The Sunday pastor suddenly began to question the status of the Seventh-day Adventist church as the true remnant church. He demanded that if it was the true church, the apostolic church, its members should be able to call upon God and see powerful results and miracles. It was then that he related the story of Ms. Nom to the Mission team there with him, and waited to see what they would do.

Pastor Sookjai, Pastor Chamee, and Ms. Rianthong led a small group of church members to Seloopat, along with the Sunday pastor. As wary villagers stood and watched, the mission group came to the metal shack and sang. They sang of the power of God, sang it over the top of Ms. Nom's screams and howls, and they prayed. They opened the door and shared Jesus with Ms. Nom.

There are two photos of Ms. Nom. The first is a "curiosity." The filth of three years is still there, a burlap bag thrown over her to replace the clothing that had long since rotted away. Claw-like finger and toe nails make her look more closely related to an animal than a human with muscles capable only of crawling after three years of atrophy. The second photo is a woman. A woman with beautiful, clean silver hair and a sarong. A woman with dignity being cared for in the arms of another human. She is calm and peaceful. Later, as she sang "This is My Father's World" with those around her, tears

of joy poured down her leather-like face.

The Sunday church pastor, many of his church members, and Seloopat villagers were so impressed by the healing of Ms. Nom that they have asked to be baptized into the Adventist church immediately. Pastor Sookjai is currently studying with them, and hopes that after studying many of the people will be led to become one with Christ and receive baptism.

Ms. Nom is staying at Pastor Sookjai's house while she gains strength and learns to walk. Through Christ she was able to see past the demons that had demanded her life for three years. "Who sent the Mission team?" asked Ms. Nom. She was told God loved her, and the Mission team members did also, Ms. Nom had only one question. "What took you so long?"

There is no difference between the matted filth that was once on Ms. Nom's body and the matted filth in my soul. The darkness and prison that was Ms. Nom's only life, is the same prison that holds me without Christ. The joy of Christ, the love in the eyes of those who love Him is my only hope of escaping prison. The Mission team was the means through which Christ freed Ms. Nom. I praise God for her, because she has helped to open my eyes again to the possibility of freedom from sin for myself, and for all those I walk past every day.

How many people are waiting to look to me, to my church, and say, "What took you so long?"

— Yvonne M. Terry,
Global Mission Correspondent, TAM

Of Water and the Spirit: Service and God

Two years ago Adventists tried to establish work in the village of Ban Huay Kuk Lang in northern Thailand. Attempts to do this met with fierce resistance to the gospel message. Until now.

On October 22 nine people from the Ekamai and Chinese churches in Bangkok and two ADRA/Thailand workers struggled up the two hour climb through mud, corn, and rice fields trying to reach the village. Walking is the only way to get there. When we arrived, alive, Pastor Siroj Sorajjakool, associate director of ADRA/Thailand, and the village headman set about organizing the work that needed to be done by the next evening.

Ban Huay Kuk Lang is situated in the hills leading into Laos and eventually China. One hundred meters from the village is a small stream for bathing. This

water is not suitable for drinking. The source of drinking water is an additional 550 meters beyond the bathing stream, up a very steep hill. The villagers had set up a small plastic tube and bamboo water pipe system to try and cope with their water needs. The system they set up takes 5-10 minutes to fill a two gallon container, depending on water pressure.

Our job was to change the PVC pipe and cement that had been hauled up the hill into a more efficient water supply system. Villagers dug trenches for the pipe. Our workers provided catch basins, connecting pipe, and storage areas. We came within 30 meters of completing the job. The remaining distance will be finished by the villagers themselves after additional pipe goes up the hill.

Friday afternoon we completed what we could. Feeling a sense of accomplishment knowing that the main effort had been achieved.

On the first night we spent in the village we fellowshiped with the people, laughing and playing games. The second followed suit after a good vespers. Nothing much. Eating. Talking. Playing. The village headman asking us to send a teacher to teach about this Christ.

For two years we had tried to bring the water of life to this village and had not succeeded. But now they were asking us to send a teacher.

The headman asked questions. He wanted to know about our God. He wanted someone to pray with him. Were his questions a result of the initial contact two years ago? Was it something that we did? Was it our example of working for the single purpose of helping



Hmong pastor joins hands with ADRA and AYC in giving Ban Huay Kuk Lang water: Spiritually and physically.

the village? Was it seeing Christ in us as we worked and interacted with villagers? The questions are not important. What is important is that God worked His way into the lives of these people.

And Jesus answered and said unto us in the village on Friday night, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again tomorrow. But whoever drinks of the water that I will give will never thirst; but the water that I will give will become a well of water springing up to eternal life."

The people said to us, "Please, give us this water, so we will not be thirsty, nor come all the way here to draw." (John 4:13,14)

Our water project is officially completed. All of us have returned to Bangkok. Still, a question remains: who will finish connecting that village with the water Jesus spoke of?

— Yvonne M. Terry,
Global Mission Correspondent, TAM

Impact

In 1988 two student missionaries answered a call from God and came to work in Thailand at the Ban Winai Hmong refugee camp on the Thai-Laotian border. Gary Peterson and Brian Russell spent two years working at the camp and interacting with the people who lived in the nearby villages. A woman from the village was hired to help Gary and Brian with cooking and cleaning. Gary and Brian developed a friendship with this woman and met her daughter, Nang.

Nang and her family were an ordinary Buddhist Thai family — except for two things: first, they were now connected with two slightly unusual foreigners (who called themselves Christians), and second, Nang had been crippled since childhood from polio. Until the age of one, Nang had been a normal baby. When polio struck her, her mother had no knowledge of vaccination and certainly no money for hospital care. From that time on Nang had been unable to walk. Her spine was severely curved, compressing her lungs so much that lifting a fork to her mouth was an exertion that left her breathless. At the time Gary and Brian met her, doctors predicted that she could not live for more than two years.

Nang certainly did not let this stop her from living. She taught herself English, largely on her own but with some help from Brian. As a friendship grew between



Nang and her mother after surgery.

Brian, Gary, and Nang's family, the family studied the witness of the two student missionaries, and were drawn to Christ. The family became the first Seventh-day Adventists in the area. Throughout all this, Gary and Brian were trying to get Nang to go for surgery in the northeastern town of Khon Kaen. They had nearly worked out all the details when a second opinion came in from Bangkok suggesting that Nang come down for a more detailed check up.

This was in 1990, and Brian and Gary had to return home. They were followed by two more student missionaries, Mark Schwisow and Chris Lake, who realized God had no intention of letting down Nang. They picked up where Brian and Gary left off, continuing building a friendship and raising US\$4,000 toward paying for surgery for Nang. Meanwhile Dr. Ronald Brody contacted ADRA Thailand director Warren Scale to see if ADRA would be interested in helping Nang. In passing, Warren mentioned Nang to his mother, Mrs Dulcie Scale, living in Australia. She was moved to help raise an additional A\$1,000.

On April 24, 1992, Nang underwent surgery at Ramatipidee Hospital in Bangkok, and a metal rod was inserted beside her spine to hold her torso straight. After one week in the intensive care unit and two weeks' recovery, Nang was able to return home. Her lungs are now able to fill to capacity, and the rod is completely covered by healthy tissue. Nang can now expect to live a full lifespan. ADRA has continued to direct the funds remaining after the surgery to cover post-op visits and medication.

So is that it? A happy ending, with nothing more? Thailand Adventist Mission has had to close all work at Bon Winai, in fact, the camp itself has shut down. As a result of the work of Brian, Gary, Mark, and Chris, there were three companies of Adventists meeting

regularly in the area. After the student missionaries left, there were two Thai pastors in the area. One of these was forced to leave upon closure of the camp, and the other has moved to the United States. But Nang hasn't gone anywhere. Her family is now building a guest house — and as Nang will be unable to work outside the home, she will be staying in the house with those who visit and with her neighbors. She wants to work in her father's house — sharing her faith.

— Yvonne M. Terry,
Global Mission Correspondent, TAM

Newborn Souls

On Sabbath, August 22, four people submitted their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. Two of them had just been released from prison.

On Fridays and weekends students from the Theology Department of the Thailand Adventist Seminary go out to visit the nearby prison and churches. At the prison there are 14 prisoners interested in the Word of God. Every time our students visit them, prisoners are happy and eager to know the truth. "We are glad your people care for us and that the Lord of heaven cares for us," a prisoner said.

"We were imprisoned for ten years and now we are released, but only our bodies. Our souls are still imprisoned by Satan. We need Jesus Christ to release our souls from sin, too" the recently released prisoners said.

The other two baptized on August 22 were students from Mission College who studied the Bible with Kriangkai, a Theology student. After a thorough study they decided to give their lives to the Lord. "I love Jesus and want to be with Him. My birthday will come in a few days. Please baptize me, so I will have a full change in my life," said Wilachinee, one of the candidates.

Every weekend students from Mission College are involved in our Spiritual Outreach Program witnessing and visiting churches that have no pastor. Some travel up to 300 kilometers. Even though it is quite hard for them, they willingly do their part.

— Pakdee Tawinno, Pastor, Muak Lek Church
and Chairman, Thailand Adventist Seminary

Landmark Decision on Sabbath Exams

The Ministry of Education of the Royal Thai Government made a landmark decision on October 10. This decision will affect all Adventist students. Until now final exams for all compulsory subjects for non-formal education fell on Saturday. No exception has ever been made for any individual because the officials didn't want to change years of tradition.

Dr. Chokchuang Chutination, a member of the Ekamai Church, made a request on behalf of his junior-high age son, Daniel, that he be allowed to sit the exam on a day other than Sabbath. Further, he requested that the state change the schedule for compulsory subjects so that it would not be a problem for other Adventist secondary school students.

The request was first submitted to lower officials in the Ministry of Education, who turned it down. For the next two years Daniel, obeying the fourth commandment, did not sit for the exam on the Sabbath, which meant that he would not be able to finish his Thai secondary education.

Not to be put down easily, Dr. Chokchuang gathered his courage and took his request to higher and higher levels of the Ministry until it reached the desk of the Minister of Education, who arranged a personal interview with Dr. Chokchuang. After much prayer by the whole family, Dr. Chokchuang went to keep his appointment with the Minister. This meeting turned out to be very productive. The minister granted the request. Not only was Daniel allowed to take the exams at another time, but a declaration was made changing the exam schedule in the future to a rotating one in which compulsory subjects would fall on different days of the week.

The official declaration changing the exam schedule will affect the entire country. Praise the Lord for intervening to change the hearts of officials who had resisted change.

Daniel was allowed to sit for two exams on Saturday night. While other students were taking the exam, Daniel was kept in confinement and given the exams after sunset. Thank God for rewarding the faithfulness of Dr. Chutination and his son by providing a way out for them when they chose to take a stand to keep His commandments, regardless of consequences.

— Lila Tidwell, Associate Director,
ADRA Thailand/Laos

■ VIETNAM ■

ADRA Signs Project Agreement with Vietnam

ADRA Vietnam signed a project agreement with the Vietnamese Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) on October 14. The agreement sets out the guidelines for implementing a cattle bank/fishing boat bank project in 10 provinces throughout Vietnam. The project will help poor, rural families increase their income by loaning them cows or fishing boats. This project will especially target war widows and handicapped persons. Funded by ADRA Sweden, the project has a value of US\$192,000.



ADRA Vietnam Director Dennis Tidwell exchanges signed documents with Mr. Nghiem Xuan Tue, Vice Director of MOLISA in Vietnam.

In addition to this project, ADRA Vietnam is also implementing a large primary health care project, and is planning to follow it up with a small enterprise development project. ADRA Vietnam's development portfolio is rounded out by numerous small, community-based development projects.

ADRA has been active in Vietnam since 1988. ADRA Indochina, which included Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, managed several projects in Vietnam until the end of 1991, when separate country offices were organized. A draft memorandum of understanding was submitted by ADRA to the Vietnamese government in early 1992. When approved, this document will give ADRA legal status as a humanitarian agency in Vietnam. ADRA Vietnam hopes to move its office from Bangkok to Hanoi in early 1993.

— Dennis Tidwell, Director, ADRA Vietnam

SOUTHEAST ASIA UNION MISSION DIRECTORY

G. C. Johnson	President, ADRA
W. T. Clark	Acting President
C. Y. Wu	Secretary, Religious Liberty
Tom Massengill	Treasurer
Peter Wong	Associate Treasurer
Steven Goh, Simon Sim	Auditors
Shirley Chapman	Family Ministry
Shupinar Koubong	Church Ministries
Samuel Money	VOP, Assistant Communication
Edmund Siagian	Education, Associate CM
.....	Publishing
.....	Health & Temperance
.....	Health Care, Spirit of Prophecy
Kenneth R. Wade	Ministerial, Communication
Dorothy Walter	Child Evangelism
.....	Shepherdess International

LOCAL MISSION DIRECTORY

Peninsular Malaysia

166-A Jalan Bukit Bintang, 55100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Telephone: 242 7795

David Leoh	President
.....	Secretary
Lai Swee Chan	Treasurer

Sabah

P. O. Box 7, 89257 Tamparuli, Sabah, Malaysia
Telephone: 782346, 782244; Fax: (088) 782346

Charles S. Gaban	President
Mansor Ginggaing	Secretary
Lim See Hin	Treasurer

Sarawak

P. O. Box 41, 93700 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia
Telephone: 242340, 242341, 242342; Fax: 242343

Daniel Walter	President
Edmund M. Liah	Secretary
Ishak Sinatupang	Treasurer

Singapore

90 Jurong East Street 13, Singapore 2260
Telephone: 561 0022; Fax: (65) 562 4923

Phoon Chek Yat	President
John S. K. Ho	Secretary-Treasurer

Thailand

Prakanong Post Office Box 234, Bangkok 10110, Thailand	
Telephone: 391 0525, 391 3595, 381 1928; Fax: (662) 381 1424	
W. S. Bassham	President
Rungit Saejang	Secretary
Betty Chai-Jongsukathaporn	Treasurer

INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTORY

Mission College	Salinee Navamaratna
Mission Health Food Company	Ken Myers
Southeast Asia Union College	K. S. Koh
Southeast Asia Publishing House	Wong Yew Seng
Thailand Publishing House	Solomon S. Agdon
Bangkok Adventist Hospital	Ronald W. Brody
Penang Adventist Hospital	William Laspe
Phuket Adventist Hospital	Nursia Supunavong
Youngberg Adventist Hospital	Joshua Goh

The Messenger is published bi-monthly as the official organ of the Southeast Asia Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, 251 Upper Serangoon Road, Singapore 1334. Tel: 284 7281; Fax: 284 7757

Editor	C. Y. Wu
Managing Editor	Marilyn Johnson
Circulation Manager	C. Y. Wu

Layout and Printing by Southeast Asia Publishing House



SOUTHEAST ASIA UNION COLLEGE



Accreditation Visits

Two accreditation teams have recently visited the SAUC campus. A delegation of four educators conducted an interim evaluation of programs and operations for the General Conference Board of Regents. The report of their visit commended SAUC for seriously pursuing the goal of academic excellence. They recommended that SAUC receive continued full accreditation by the Board of Regents.

The Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC) of Seattle, Washington, sent a team of two educators to review SAUC. Because students attending SAUC are eligible to receive degrees from Walla Walla College, the programs of SAUC must be reviewed and evaluated by this North American accrediting agency. To receive accreditation, colleges must meet standards for approval in 10 categories.

The 17-page report filed by the NASC evaluators included many strong commendations. The NASC report commended SAUC for:

- High morale among students and faculty;
- Aggressive action plans for future academic and plant development;
- High quality academic programs;
- Strong faculty development program;
- Cultural and ethnic diversity;
- An effective affiliation with WWC.

Through the NASC visit and evaluation report, it is expected that SAUC will again be granted accreditation through its affiliation with WWC.

Accreditation is a process that recognizes educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality that entitle them to the confidence of other schools and the public. The positive results of the two recent accreditation reviews of SAUC help maintain confidence in the quality of SAUC education.

New Faculty

The Southeast Asia Union College faculty recently welcomed two new members Constance Strahle and Lee Ki Plin who joined the English and Religion departments respectively.

Strahle is a communications graduate of Walla Walla College and teaches English and speech at SAUC. Her students appreciate her enthusiasm. "She's so cheerful and kind," according to Yano Nongkran, a Thai student in her Remedial English class. "I really enjoy studying with her." Strahle enjoys her students as well, but at the same time she admits her influence over the students' potential communication skills "sobers me and presents a challenge." Strahle has coordinated the recent revival and production of the SAUC Contact, the SAUC alumni magazine that has been inert for three years.

Also joining SAUC is Lee Ki Plin, who graduated with honors from Southeast Asia Union College in 1985. He is presently associate pastor at Balestier Road Church. Pastor Lee holds an M.S. degree in Marriage Counseling from Loma Linda University, and is applying his training as he teaches the class Marriage and Family Life. His background in both academics and private counseling practice adds richness and diversity to class presentations.

Affiliation Director Visits SAUC

Dr. Melvin Lang, Associate Academic Dean of Walla Walla College (WWC) and Director of the Walla Walla College/Southeast Asia Union College Affiliation Program, recently visited the campus of SAUC. This was his first visit to SAUC since his appointment as Director of the Affiliation in 1990.

During his visit he participated with the SAUC staff in a college retreat where the faculty developed an Action Plan for the future of the college. This Action Plan was the result of nine months of study and discussion by the faculty, and served as a part of the preparation for the evaluation of SAUC by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges of North America, a major accrediting agency. Dr. Lang also assisted in a revision of the WWC/SAUC Affiliation Bulletin that will be published in November.

Since affiliation was begun in 1984, over 80 students have received Walla Walla College degrees while studying on the SAUC campus.

— Gary Brendel,
Academic Dean, SAUC