

# *Looking to Jesus*

## *Journey into Renewal and Revival*



**Geoff Waugh**

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*With love and thanks to all our family*

**Review of *Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival***

Geoff Waugh's life and ministry has influenced people all around the world. The story of his life and ministry will be of interest not only to those who know him - you will find yourself reflecting on your own journey with Jesus. Beginning in Australia, then Papua New Guinea, his invited ministry in renewal and revival has involved every continent. Here is a personal journey with reflections that will enrich the lives of all readers. As he 'looked to Jesus' along the way he was opened up to many exciting new ventures in Australia and into countries where revival and renewal is vibrant, changing many lives. Although a biography, many others are involved. Geoff's journey is like a rose bush with strong roots and branches. He is one bud of many, opening into a beautiful bloom as he opened himself to God's leading into an exciting journey. His reflections fit naturally, showing how his personal journey has relevance for others. (John Olley)

**Review of sequel: *Journey into Mission* (expanded from Chapter 8)**

I have read many similar stories, but this one exceeds them all.

I read the on-line edition and was blown away by the response of the Solomon Islanders to the power of the Holy Spirit. It was amazing, or should I say God-planned. Geoff has done well to not only be in so many places and seeing God at work, but also writing a book about it all. It's as if it has all happened in a world apart, but the events in Brisbane show that it could happen in Australia also. (Barbara Vickridge)

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*Logo: basin & towel,  
lamp & parchment,  
in the light of the cross*

# *Journey into Renewal and Revival*

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## ***Revival Highlights***

Chapter 8 of this book describes revivals I have seen or been involved with. These highlights give a brief glimpse of some of those revivals. See Chapter 8 for more details.

### ***Australia: Elcho Island (1994)***

In that same evening the word just spread like the flames of fire and reached the whole community in Galiwin'ku. Gelung and I couldn't sleep at all that night because people were just coming for the ministry, bringing the sick to be prayed for, for healing. Others came to bring their problems. Even a husband and wife came to bring their marriage problem, so the Lord touched them and healed their marriage. Many unplanned and unexpected things happened every time we went from camp to camp to meet with the people. The fellowship was held every night and more and more people gave their lives to Christ, and it went on and on until sometimes the fellowship meeting would end around about midnight. There was more singing, testimony, and ministry going on. People did not feel tired in the morning, but still went to work.

### ***Philippines (1995)***

During the class seminars, my students reported on various signs and wonders that they had experienced in their churches. Many of them expected God to do the same things now as he did in the New Testament, but not all! "We don't seem to have miracles in our church," said one student, a part-time Baptist pastor and police inspector. "You could interview a pastor from a church that does," I suggested. So he interviewed a Pentecostal pastor about miraculous answers to prayer in their church. That student reported to the class how the Pentecostal church sent a team of young people to the local mental hospital for monthly meetings where they sang and witnessed and prayed for people. Over 40 patients attended their first meeting there, and they prayed for 26 personally, laying hands on them. A month later, when they returned for their next meeting, all those 26 patients had been discharged and sent home.

### ***Ghana, West Africa (1995)***

When we arrived in the mountain town of Suhum, it was dark. The torrential rain had cut off the electricity supply. The rain eased off a bit, so we gathered in the market square and prayed to God to guide us and to take over. Soon the rain ceased. The electricity came on. The host team began excitedly shouting that it was a miracle. "We will talk about this for years" they exclaimed with gleaming eyes. ...

People reported various touches of God in their lives. Some were healed. Later in the week an elderly man excitedly told how he had come to the meeting almost blind but now he could see. Each day we held morning worship and teaching sessions for Christians in a church, hot under an iron roof on those clear, tropical sunny days. During the second morning I vividly 'saw' golden light fill the church and swallow up or remove blackness. At that point the African Christians became very noisy, vigorously celebrating and shouting praises to God. A fresh anointing fell on them just then.

### *Toronto, Canada (1995)*

Both of us appreciated the gracious, caring way people prayed for us, and others. No rush. No hype. No pressure. Whether we stood, or sat in a chair, or rested on the carpeted floor, those praying for us did so quietly with prayers prompted by the Holy Spirit. Those praying laid a hand on us gently, as led, and trusted the Lord to touch us. He did. Warmth and love permeated us. We returned to our hotel after the meetings aware of increased peace and deeper assurance of the Lord's love and grace. ... After returning to Brisbane I noticed that people I prayed for received strong touches from the Lord, most resting in the Spirit on the floor. We needed people to be ready to catch those who fell, to avoid them getting hurt (then needing extra healing prayer!). Some of them had visions of the Lord blessing them and others.

### *Nepal (2000)*

**By Raju:** Out of about 200 participants in the conference by the grace of God 100 of them were baptized in the Holy Spirit praising the Lord, singing, falling, crying, and many other actions as the Holy Spirit would prompt them to act. About ten of them testified that they had never experienced such a presence of the power and love of God. Some others testified being lifted to heavenly realms by the power of the Holy Spirit, being surrounded by the angels of the Lord in a great peace, joy, and love toward each other and being melted in the power of his presence. Many re-committed their lives to the Lord for ministry by any means through his revelation. ...

Some 60 evangelists from Gorkha, Dhanding, Chitwan, Butwal declared that they were renewed in their spirits by the refreshing of the Holy Spirit and they are now going to serve the Lord in the field wherever the Holy Spirit will lead them to be fully fledged in His service. In the last day of the conference while praying together with the congregation and committing them in his hands, many prophesied that the Lord was assuring them of great changes in their ministry, life and the area. While the power of God was at work in our midst three children of 6-7 years old fell down weeping, screaming and testifying about a huge hand coming on them and touching their stomachs and healing them instantly. After the prayer all the participants got into the joy of the Holy Spirit and started dancing to the Lord, singing and praising Him for His goodness.

On 25 April we held another conference in Nazarene Church pastored by Rinzi Lama in Kathmandu. Ten churches unitedly participated in the two days gathering where about 100 people participated. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit continued in this conference refreshing many in their spirits and bringing much re-commitment. Some cases of healing were testified. ...

### *Pensacola, USA (2002)*

I liked the spontaneous bits best. Before Friday night's revival service some people in the singing group of over 50 people on stage began singing free harmonies without music while they waited for the sound system to work, and we all joined in. It sounded like

angels harmonising in continual worship. Wonderful. No need for words!

A visitor preached, calling for faith and action. Their prayer team prayed for many hundreds at the 'altar call' – short and sharp, but relevant and challenging. The man who prayed briefly for me spoke about national and international ministries the Lord would open for me.

### *Vanuatu, South Pacific (2002)*

**By Romulo:** “The speaker was the Upper Room Church pastor, Jotham Napat who is also the Director of Meteorology in Vanuatu. The night was filled with the awesome power of the Lord and we had the Upper Room church ministry who provided music with their instruments. With our typical Pacific Island setting of bush and nature all around us, we had dances, drama, testified in an open environment, letting the wind carry the message of salvation to the bushes and the darkened areas. That worked because most of those that came to the altar call were people hiding or listening in those areas. The Lord was on the road of destiny with many people that night.”

Unusual lightning hovered around the sky and as soon as the prayer teams had finished praying with those who rushed forward at the altar call, the tropical rain pelted down on that open field.

God poured out his Spirit on many lives that night, including Jerry Waqainabete and Simon Kofe. Both of them played rugby in the popular university teams and enjoyed drinking and the nightclub scene. Both changed dramatically. Many of their friends said it would not last. It did last and led them into ministry and mission.

### *Vanuatu (2003)*

Significant events associated with the coming of the Gospel to South Pentecost included a martyr killed and a paramount chief's wife returning from death.

Thomas Tumtum had been an indentured worker on cane farms in Queensland, Australia. Converted there, he returned around 1901 to his village on South Pentecost with a new young disciple from a neighbouring island. They arrived when the village was tabu (taboo) because a baby had died a few days earlier, so no one was allowed into the village. Ancient tradition dictated that anyone breaking tabu must be killed, so they were going to kill Thomas, but his friend Lulkon asked Thomas to tell them to kill him instead so that Thomas could evangelize his own people. Just before he was clubbed to death at a sacred Mele palm tree, he read John 3:16, then closed his eyes and prayed for them. Thomas became a pioneer of the church in South Pentecost, establishing Churches of Christ there.

Paramount Chief Morris Bule died at 111 on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2016, the son of the highest rank paramount chief on Pentecost Island. After a wife of Chief Morris's father died and was prepared for burial, the calico cloths around her began to move. She had returned from death and they took the grave cloths of her. She sat up and told them all to leave their pagan ways and follow the Christian way. Then she lay down and died.

### *Solomon Islands, South Pacific (2003)*

Revival began with the Spirit moving on youth and children in village churches. They had extended worship in revival songs, many visions and revelations and lives being changed with strong love for the Lord. Children and youth began meeting daily from 5pm for hours of praise, worship and testimonies. A police officer reported reduced crimes, and said former rebels were attending daily worship and prayer meetings.

Revival continued to spread throughout the region. Revival movements brought moral change and built stronger communities in villages in the Solomon Islands including these lasting developments:

1 Higher moral standards. People involved in the revival quit crime and drunkenness, and promoted good behaviour and co-operation.

2 Christians who once kept their Christianity inside churches and meetings talked more freely about their lifestyle in the community and amongst friends.

3 Revival groups, especially youth, enjoyed working together in unity and community, including a stronger emphasis on helping others in the community.

4 Families were strengthened in the revival. Parents spent more time with their youth and children to encourage and help them, often leading them in Bible reading and family prayers.

5 Many new gifts and ministries were used by more people than before, including revelations and healing. Even children received revelations or words of knowledge about hidden magic artefacts or ginger plants related to spirit power and removed them.

6 Churches grew. Many church buildings in the Marovo Lagoon were pulled down and replaced with much large buildings to fit in the crowds. Offerings and community support increased.

7 Unity. Increasingly Christians united in reconciliation for revival meetings, prayer and service to the community. ...

Children received revelations about their parent's secret sins or the location of hidden magic artefacts or stolen property. Many children had visions of Jesus during the revival meetings. Often he would be smiling when they were worshipping and loving him, or he would show sadness when they were naughty or unkind. ... A policeman from Seghe told me that since the revival began crime has dropped. Many former young criminals were converted and joined the youth worshipping God each afternoon. Revival continued to spread throughout the region.

### *Vanuatu: Pentecost (2004)*

**By Don:** The night's worship led by the law students started off as usual with singing, then spontaneously turned into a joyful party. Then Joanna Kenilorea gave a testimony about a very sad event in her family that brought the Keniloreas back to God. She was especially eloquent in her address and when finished, Geoff found that it had been so powerful that he had no more to add that night and made an immediate altar call for prayer. Almost as one, 300 high school students, teachers and others present rose from their seats and moved out into the aisle to the front of the hall. There were a couple of slow starters, but when it became apparent that Geoff could not possibly pray for each individually, even these moved up to the back of the crowd until everybody in that room had come forward. Geoff in all his years of ministry and association with renewal ministries and revival (and that was the subject of his doctorate) had never experienced anything like it. The most remarkable thing for Helen and me was we were there and part of it in such a remote and previously unknown part of our world! It was surely a night to remember.

### *Vanuatu: Pentecost (2005)*

Many of the older people attending these intensive teaching sessions had been involved in local revivals through many years. They understood the principles involved such as repentance, reconciliation, unity, personal and group prayer that was earnest and full of faith, and using various gifts of the Spirit. They were most familiar with words of wisdom and knowledge, discerning spirits (especially from local witchcraft), revelations, healings and deliverance.

I learned much from them, especially about the spirit world and humbly seeking God for revelation and direction. We westerners tend to jump in and organize things without really waiting patiently on God for his revelation and direction. Many westerners, including missionaries, find waiting frustrating or annoying, but local people find it normal and natural. Wait on God and move when he shows you the way. For example, you can seek the Lord about who will speak, what to say, and how to respond. We westerners often use schedules and programs instead.

### *Kenya, East Africa (2005)*

We gave them real bread for communion, not just symbolic cubes. The Spirit led me to give them all the bread we had. ... "Can I take some home to my family?" asked one young man. That's a hard question to answer in front of 30 hungry people. "It's yours. You can take some of your own communion bread home if you want to," I answered. Everyone then took a large handful of communion bread, and most put some in their pockets to take home later. We shared real glasses of grape juice in plastic glasses, thanking the Lord for his body and blood given for us. After my return to Australia I heard that the bread apparently multiplied, as those who took some home had enough for their families to eat. Some of them were still eating it two weeks later. Francis added: "Actually the miracle continued months after we began NBM and we were feeding members each Saturday afternoon with tea and bread. God continued multiplying the food and there was always enough."



### *Fiji, South Pacific (2005)*

**By Jerry:** While we were praying and worshipping, the Lord told me for the first ever time to take the salt water and the land and give it back to God. And I told this brother that when we offered it to God the rain is going to fall just to confirm that God hears and accepts it according to His leading. I told him in advance while the Lord was putting it in my heart to do it... this is the first ever time and I always heard about it when people are being led... now it has happened to me... I could not even believe it. As soon as he brought the water and I brought the soil to signify the sacrifice, I felt the mighty presence of God with us and was like numb... and the sun was really shining up in the sky with very little clouds. This rain fell slowly upon us... I still could not believe... my cousin was astonished and could not believe it... it happened according to the way the Lord told me and I told him. It was like a made up story.

### *Vanuatu: Tanna Island (2006)*

The Lord moved strongly on young people, especially in worship and prayer. Children and youth were anointed to write and sing new songs in the local dialects. Some children asked the pastors to ordain them as missionaries – which was new for everyone. After prayer about it, they did. Those children are strong evangelists already, telling Bible stories in pagan villages. One 9 year old boy did that, and people began giving their lives to God in his pagan village, so he became their ‘pastor’, assisted by older Christians from other villages.

### *Vanuatu (2006)*

**Raised from the dead:** At sharing time in the Upper Room service, a nurse, Leah Waqa, told how she had been recently on duty when parents brought in their young daughter who had been badly hit in a car accident, and showed no signs of life - the heart monitor registered zero. Leah was in the dispensary giving out medicines when she heard about the girl and she suddenly felt unusual boldness, so went to the girl and prayed for her, commanding her to live, in Jesus’ name. She prayed for almost an hour, mostly in tongues, and after an hour the monitor started beeping and the girl recovered. ... The revival team, including the two of us from Australia, trekked for a week into mountain villages. We literally obeyed Luke 10 – most going with no extra shirt, no sandals, and no money. The trek began with a five hour climb across the island to the village of Ranwas on ridges by the sea on the eastern side. Mathias led worship, and strong moves of the Spirit touched everyone. We prayed for people many times in each meeting. At one point I spat on the dirt floor, making mud to show what Jesus did once. Marilyn Wari, wife of the President of the Churches of Christ, then jumped up asking for prayer for her eyes, using the mud. Later she testified that the Lord told her to do that, and then she found she could read her small pocket Bible without glasses. So she read to us all. Meetings continued like that each night. ...

Revival meetings erupted at Ponra. The Spirit just took over. Visions. Revelations. Reconciliations. Healings. People drunk in the Spirit. Many resting on the floor getting

blessed in various ways. When they heard about healing through ‘mud in the eye’ at Ranwas some wanted mud packs also at Ponra! ...

The sound of angels singing filled the air about 3am. It sounded as though the village church was packed. The harmonies in high descant declared “For You are great and You do wondrous things. You are God alone” and then harmonies, without words until words again for “I will praise You O Lord my God with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name for evermore” with long, long harmonies on “forever more”. Just worship. Pure, awesome and majestic.

### *Solomon Islands (2006)*

**By Grant:** “Most of a thousand youth came forward. Some ran to the altar, some crying! There was an amazing outpouring of the Spirit and because there were so many people Geoff and I split up and started laying hands on as many people as we could. People were falling under the power everywhere (some testified later to having visions). There were bodies all over the field (some people landing on top of each other). Then I did a general healing prayer and asked them to put their hand on the place where they had pain. After we prayed people began to come forward sharing testimonies of how the pain had left their bodies and they were completely healed! The meeting stretched on late into the night with more healing and many more people getting deep touches. It was one of the most amazing nights. I was deeply touched and feel like I have left a part of myself in Choiseul. God did an amazing thing that night with the young people and I really believe that he is raising up some of them to be mighty leaders in revival.”

A young man who was healed that night returned to his nearby village and prayed for his sick mother and brother. Both were healed immediately. He told the whole convention about that the next morning at the meeting, adding that he had never done that before. The delegation from Kariki islands further west, returned home the following Monday. The next night they led a meeting where the Spirit of God moved in revival. Many were filled with the Spirit, had visions, were healed, and discovered many spiritual gifts including discerning spirits and tongues. That revival has continued, and spread.

### *Solomon Islands (2007)*

The week at **Taro** was the fullest of the whole trip, the most tiring, and also the most powerful so far. Worship was amazing. They brought all the United Church ministers together for the week from all surrounding islands where revival is spreading and was accelerated after the youth convention near here in Choiseul the previous December, where the tsunami hit in April. Many lay people also filled the church each morning - about 200. ...

It’s fascinating that we so often see powerful moves of God’s Spirit when all the churches and Christians unite together in worship and ministry. God blesses unity of heart and action, especially among God’s people. It always involves repentance and reconciliation.

In all these places people made strong commitments to the Lord, and healings were quick and deep. Both in Vanuatu and in the Solomon Islands the people said that they could all understand my English, even those who did not speak English, so they did not need an interpreter. Another miracle. ...

**Marovo Lagoon: By Don:** This is where the revival started with children of the lagoon at Easter 2003. Geoff had previously visited this church in September 2003. The old church building has been pulled down and the foundations were being pegged out on an open ridge high above the lagoon for the new one, which will probably hold up to 1000 as the revival swells the numbers.

Again students led the worship. Most of the adults were traditional, but there were forty or so in revival ministry teams who pray for the sick, cast out spirits and evangelize. We joined the meeting by 8pm and finished at 1.30am!

Worship went for an hour. Geoff then preached for nearly an hour. In his words –

Very lively stuff. Only tiny kids went to sleep - 50 of them on pandanus leaf mats at the front. Then we prayed for people - and prayed, and prayed, and prayed and prayed, on and on and on and on! I involved the ministers (after praying for them and leaders first), and the students - and still people came for prayer - by the hundreds.

We prayed for leaders who wanted prayer first, then for their ministry teams, then for youth leaders and the youth, and then for anyone else who wanted prayer, and at about midnight Mark called all the children for prayer, so the parents woke them up and carried the babies. I guess I prayed for 30 sleeping kids in mother's arms and for their mothers and fathers as well.

Then after midnight when the meeting "finished" about 200 remained for personal prayer, one by one. So I involved four students with me, and that was great on-the-job training as well as praying. We prayed about everything imaginable, including many barren wives, men whose wives were un-cooperative, women whose husbands weren't interested, and healings galore - certainly many more than 100 healings. In every case, those with whom we prayed said that the pain was totally gone.

I doubt if I've ever seen so many healings, happening so quickly. At 1.30am there were still 30 people waiting for prayer, so I got desperate, and prayed for them all at once. I told them just to put their hands on the parts of their body needing healings, and I prayed for them all at once, while the students and some ministers still there laid hands on them, and I moved quickly around to lay hands on each one. Most of the time we try to be led by the Spirit, but it's easy to slip back into routine patterns.

They were all happy, and again reported healings. I wish I'd thought of that earlier! But at least a few hundred had a chance to talk with us and be specific about their needs. They continue praying for one another for healings and many needs.

### *China (2007)*

I had the great honour of speaking at a house church. People arrived in ones or twos over an hour or so, and stayed for many hours. Then they left quietly in ones or twos again, just personal visitors to that host family. Food on the small kitchen table welcomed everyone, some of it brought by the visitors. About 30 of us crowded into a simple room with very few chairs. Most sat on the thin mat coverings. They sang their own heartfelt worship songs in their own language and style, pouring out love to the Lord, sometimes with tears. The leader played a very basic guitar in a very basic way.

Everyone listened intently to the message, and gladly asked questions, all of it interpreted. There was no need for an altar call or invitation to receive prayer. Everyone wanted personal prayer. Our prayer team of three or four people prayed with each person for specific needs such as healing and with personal prophecies. That flowed strongly. I knew none of that group, but received 'pictures' or words of encouragement for each one, as did the others. While prayer continued, some began slipping quietly away. Others had supper. Others stayed to worship quietly. It was a quiet night because they did not want to disturb neighbours or attract attention. Most people in that group were new believers with no Christian background at all. They identified easily with the house churches of the New Testament, the persecution, and the miracles, because they experienced all that as well. Many unbelievers become Christians because someone prayed for their healing and the Lord healed them.

### *Fiji (2008, 2009)*

**By Romulo (2008):** "Inter-tertiary went very well at Suva Grammar School that was hosted by Fiji School of Medicine Christian Fellowship (CF). It was an awesome two nights of fellowship with God and with one another. The Pacific Students for Christ combined worship was a huge blessings for those that attended the two nights of worship. Pastor Geoff spoke on Obedience to the Holy Spirit - this being a spark to revival and power. Students came in droves for prayers and the worship lit up the Grammar School skies with tears, repentance, anointing and empowerment. The worship by Fiji School of Medicine students brought us closer to intimate worship with the King. It was a Pacific gathering and each and every person there was truly blessed as young people sought a closer intimate relationship with the King. We were blessed beyond words. Thank you all for the prayers, the thoughts and the giving." Roneil, a Fijian Indian, added, "It was all so amazing, so amazing that words can't describe it. For me, it was obvious that the glory of God just descended upon the people during the Inter-tertiary CF. I've never seen an altar call that lasted for way more than an hour. I myself just couldn't get enough of it. It was and still is so amazing. God's anointing is just so powerful. Hallelujah to Him Who Was, Who Is and Who is to Come." ...

**By Romulo (2009):** Two of the memorable highlights were the washing of leaders' feet at RCCG Samabula and the worship service on Wednesday at RCCG Kiuva village. In fact I remember picking up the pastors on Sunday morning, and seeing Pastor Geoff carrying towels. I said to myself, 'This is going to be fun.' And fun it was. God was teaching the

church the principles of servanthood, demonstrated not just by words but by actions. It was a moving experience as Pastor Geoff on his knees started washing feet, drying them with a towel and speaking into the lives of leaders. Powerful also was the fact that Pastor Geoff's leading was to wash the feet of leaders. That Sunday former PM Rabuka, who heard of the Pastor's visit, came to church for prayer. Of course the leading for Pastor Geoff to pray for leaders meant Rabuka would get his feet washed too. One of the acts that will be embedded forever in my mind was seeing Rabuka sit on the floor, remove his coat and wash the feet of Pastor Geoff and KY Tan. He then dried their feet with his 'favourite' Fiji rugby coat (he played in their national rugby team). I was blown away by this act of humility, as demonstrated by Christ on his final night with the disciples before his arrest and execution. On Wednesday night, we were at Kiuva village. The powerful and angelic worship of young people and kids in Tailevu made the atmosphere one of power with a tangible presence of the Lord in the place. We saw a glimpse of revival and the power of God at work in such a simple setting. I was blessed to witness for myself the prevalent hunger in the body as lives connected with God. In all, it is purely refreshing being in the presence of God and being touched and filled by the Holy Spirit.

### **Vanuatu: Pentecost (2010-2018)**

One Sunday there we shared in a combined churches service in the packed village church. Before the service Andrew had words of knowledge about pain in a man's shoulders and the right side of a woman's face. Both came for prayer while people were gathering in the church. We then discovered that the man was the leader of the service and the woman preached that day! Many times, the words of knowledge Andrew received were for pastors and leaders first, and then later we prayed for others. At that Sunday service I was strongly led to call people out for prayer during communion. That was a first for them. It never happened in communion. A large number came for prayer and the healings were fast and strong.

One night Andrew felt led to wash everyone's feet. That took the whole service! We put a bucket of water near the door (regularly refilled) and Andrew washed everyone's feet as they arrived while we worshipped, prayed, spoke and called people out for healing and empowering prayer. I was led to wash the leaders feet that night also. ...

People were even more welcoming this time at Bunlap custom village. We prayed for dozens of people, and their pain left. We talked about the kingdom of God and how Jesus saves and heals. Some of the people told us they believed that, and when the chief allowed it they would be part of a church there. The paramount chief once burned a Bible given to him by a revival team from the Christian villages. Now he is willing for a church to be built on the ground where he burned the Bible. Hallelujah – what a testimony to God's grace and glory. For the first time ever that paramount chief asked for prayer. He wanted healing from head pain. Andrew placed his hands on the sides of the chief's head and we prayed for him in Jesus' name. The pain left.

Like Jesus' disciples, we returned to Ranwas village church rejoicing that afflicting spirits were cast out, people were healed in Jesus' name, some believed in Jesus, and they now plan to have a church there. Our Bunlap host chief told Pastor Rolanson he can bring his guitar

and have meetings in the chief's house anytime.

Some Christians at Ranwas were amazed to hear the reports. They faced witchcraft and curses from Bunlap for a century, and they saw many local revivals. Again, during communion on Sunday large numbers came for prayer for healing, and healings were fast and strong. They had never done that in communion before. At all the meetings Andrew had specific words of knowledge about healings, and pain left quickly. ... By the end of the mission trip people in the congregation were praying for each other in faith and seeing God touch their friends.

I returned with my grandson Dante and others in June-July, 2017. Stan came with his wife Daphne (my sister) and Emily from Riverlife Baptist joined us. The Riverlife church people sent a keyboard, a guitar, and a large box of reading glasses with us. We often take used and discarded spectacles with us on these trips, and also pray for healing!

This time we had meetings at Ranwadi High School again and once again prayed with large numbers there. Then we returned to the villages for more meetings and visitation with Pastor Rolanson. At a Sunday service, Elder Jackson gave his testimony that his blood readings were normal at the clinic following prayer for diabetes.

We continue to encourage Christians to pray for one another in faith and obedience. I also participated when their new MP Silas Bule, formerly principal at Ranwadi High School, distributed Gideon's New Testaments to the local school.

Then in 2018 I had a team of seven of us. We stayed in Rolanson's village near on the coast. Rolanson, pastor and evangelist, has been with me on mission in The Solomon Islands and Australia.

Again we prayed with large numbers at their village meetings and during the day. Again we prayed for healing and anointing during communion. That was powerful. Pain left immediately with healing prayers, people were filled with the Spirit, using spiritual gifts, and we saw rising faith and obedience among them. They regularly pray for one another.

**These reports are told in more detail in Chapter 8 of this book and given more fully in my book *[Journey into Mission](#)*.**

## **Preface: thanks**

Many people impacted my life and my journey in many ways. I am truly grateful, and I thank God for his faithfulness and his presence in every relationship.

My parents, Jim and Hilda, gave me strong and loving foundations, showed me the right path to follow, and set wonderful examples of a Christian dad and mum, committed to God, to our family, and to others. Our second mum, Eileen Maude, added her selfless strength and love, supporting us all in our large, diverse family.

Constant companions on my journey from childhood have been my sisters and brothers, a growing, close knit family circle, even when that circle widened across Australia from far east, north and south to far west, as well overseas. All of us married Christians, and the Waugh tribe expanded from nine to ninety, including close relatives. Mum's brother and his family have been a significant part of that lifelong journey. Many of us now have three generations enriched by extended family visits and celebrations.

We inherited the blessing of godly grandparents, so Christian uncles and aunts and their families have touched all our lives, confirming and guiding us in our journey through life. Many times they have been there for us with personal and practical support.

Our church communities provided firm and steady friendships, many lasting our whole lives. Some of our closest friendships came from those congregations. Our churches provided not only a strong and lasting support community but also the opportunity to grow in service and ministry.

I'm grateful, now, for my teachers, especially the good ones. That includes some inspiring people who lit fires or fanned the flame in me and pointed the way to greater possibilities. That includes many at Fuller Theological Seminary as well as others at theological college and teachers college as well as some at university.

The dedicated people I worked with in Papua New Guinea, expatriate and indigenous, touched my life in so many significant ways. I am grateful for the compassionate support of mission staff. Those years powerfully influenced my life and changed my worldview.

My quarter century working with the Methodist and Uniting Church expanded my vision, thrusting me into ecumenical and creative ministries in God's great big wonderful family. We had so many opportunities to touch thousands of lives in churches, camps, conventions and conferences. People I worked with there impacted my own life, deeply.

Similarly, I am grateful for so many dedicated people I worked with and served in Christian Outreach Centre and Christian Heritage College. They inspired and challenged me with their commitment to God and to excellence.

My teaching ministry expanded into short-term missions in many different countries. I could never have planned that! Invitations came, often unexpectedly, and the way opened, often miraculously. We worked with wonderful, humble leaders and servants of God in many diverse cultures. I'm sure I received far more than I gave.

A great many shared my journey into renewal and revival ministries. We worshipped together, prayed together, dreamed together, and served the Lord together. Many of you journeyed with me through decades of pioneering service and ministry. That included prayer groups, church services, meetings, conferences, camps and community living, as well as serving God in many overseas mission trips. I am truly grateful.

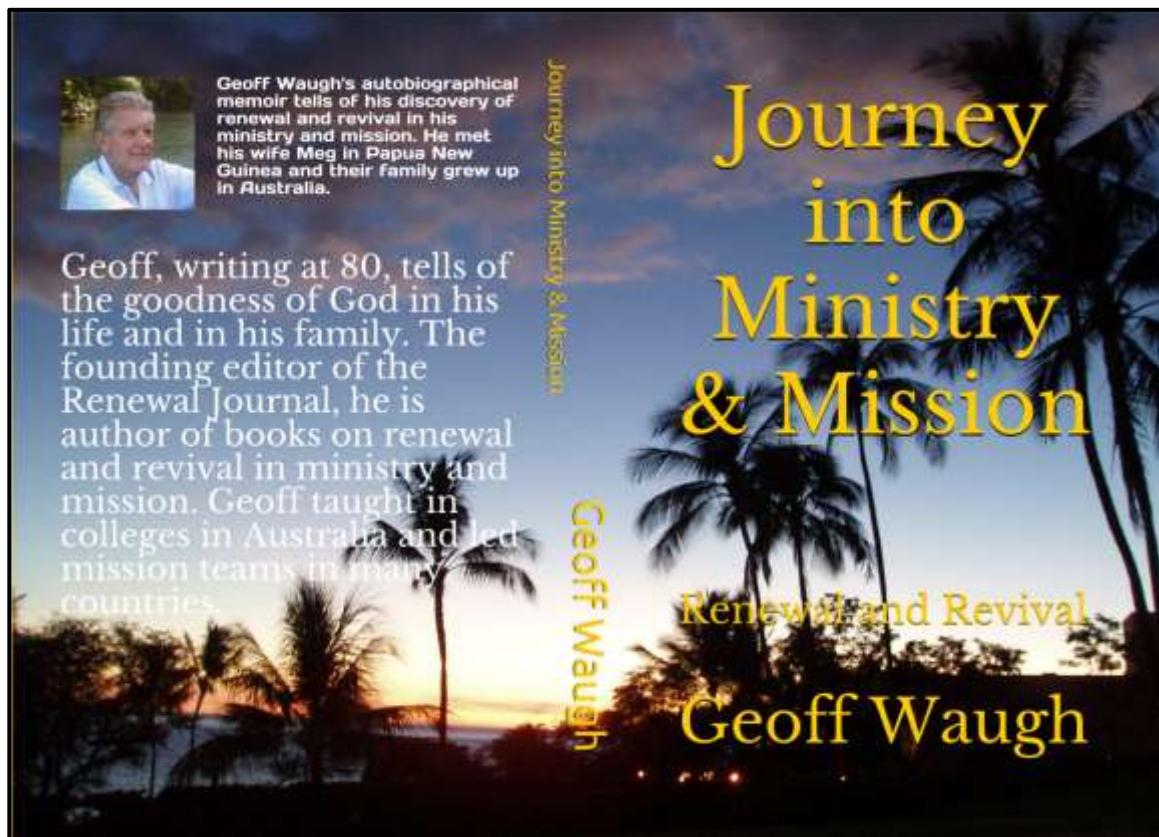
Through many decades of our own growing family we have been warmly welcomed

by my wife's family, caring grandparents for our children, and widely scattered relatives getting together for special events and family visits through the years.

I am especially thankful for the immeasurable support and love of my wife, Meg, who continually gave herself wholeheartedly in serving God and others. Everywhere we went, her life impacted people for God and his kingdom. Our children inherited her strengths and compassionate commitment, and they and their families continue to love and support me. I am grateful beyond words.

My autobiographical books (see Appendix) have developed and expanded. I published the first edition of this book at 70, and this second edition at 80. It expands Chapter 8: Revival, and updates other sections.

*Journey into Mission*, also published at 80, gives more details about revivals I have seen in my mission travels. I condensed both books, this one and *Journey into Mission*, into one autobiography, *Journey into Ministry and Mission* (2018).

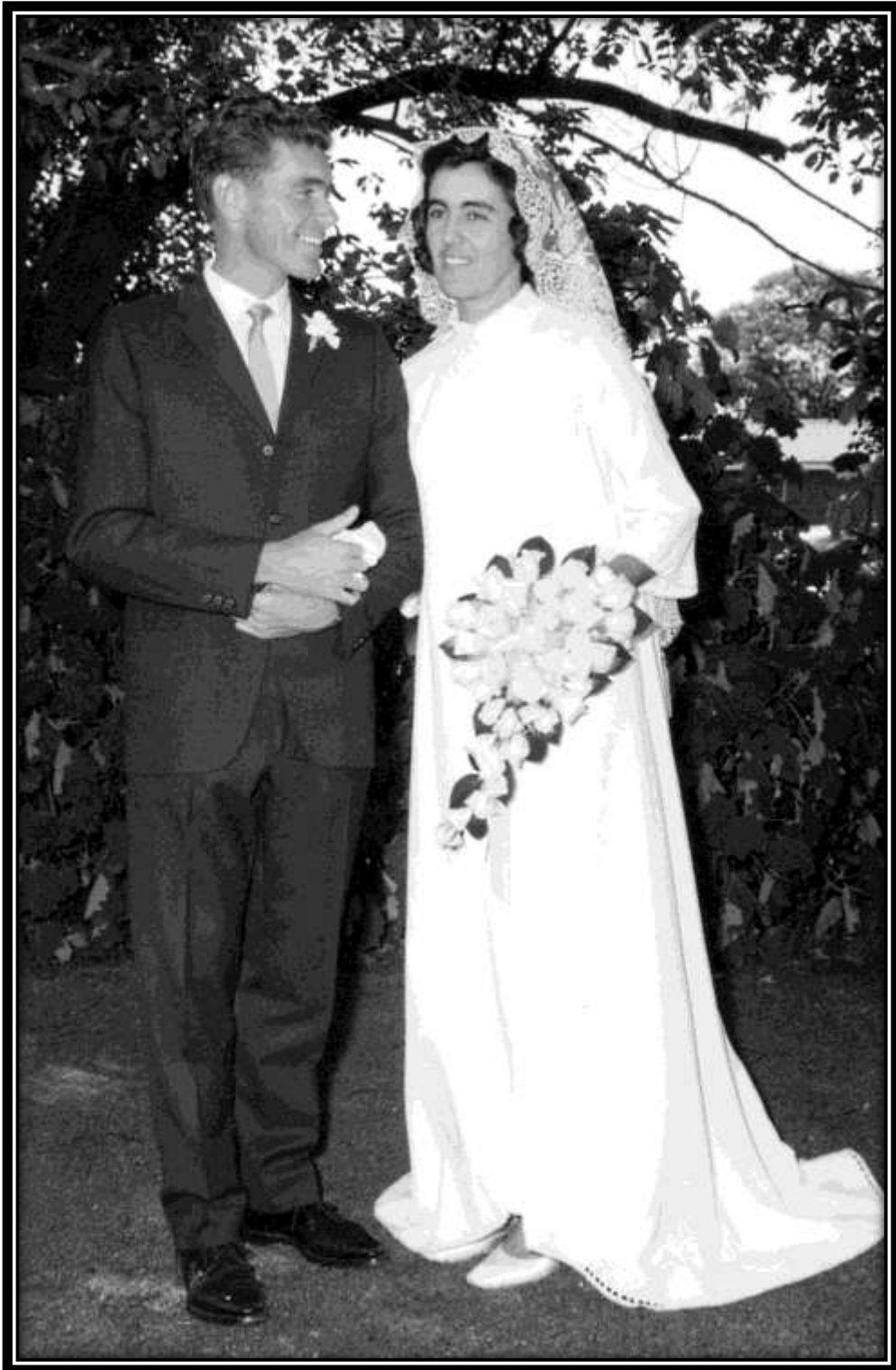


***Journey into Ministry and Mission***

**Condensed from this book and from *Journey into Mission***



## Introduction: Waugh stories



*Geoff and Meg 1968*

My journey into renewal and revival saw amazing changes in the world, in the church, and in my own life.

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible that I grew up with sounds ancient to me now. A four-hymn-sandwich is no longer my Sunday diet though it was for nearly half my life. Suits, ties, hats and gloves of my boyhood have disappeared from church services I now attend. Bible study groups, common in my youth, became ministry home groups applying Scripture to our lives. The typewriter I used for half my life belongs in the museum. Now it is often cheaper to fly interstate than to drive.

Change changed. Cultural change once took hundreds or thousands of years. Now it takes decades, or less. Medical advances inoculate us against disease which crippled or killed people when I was young. Women not only vote now but share parliament and pulpit and podium with men.

My lifetime saw cars and planes become commonplace. Life changed with automatic cars, super-jumbo jets, the atomic bomb, nuclear missiles, astronauts, supermarkets, endless varieties of bread and milk, synthetic clothing, line phones then mobile phones, reel-to-reel tapes then cassettes then CDs and DVDs, black and white TV then colour, analogue TV then digital, black and white photos then digital cameras, personal computers and memory sticks, laptops, the internet, email, Walkman, iPod, pews and organs then flexible seating and bands, hymn books then OHPs then data projection.

Most of those innovations did not exist in my youth. Half a century ago people usually stayed in the same home, community, job and church. Now families scatter far and wide and people change jobs often. So have I.

I rode on planes to visit Israel and Europe, to attend conferences in Canada, America, and Brazil, as well as to teach church leaders in Africa, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Philippines, China, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and every state in Australia.

So 80 (going on 40, with extra naps) seems a good age to recall life's adventures, now that I've attained and surpassed my three score years and ten. At 80, some memories fade. Some bleach out completely. This book revives memories, of my life's journey. That journey into renewal and revival often surprised me. I changed. So did the church and the world.

Jump into these Waugh stories wherever you like. I'd probably start at Chapters 7 or 8, on renewal and revival. So I started this book with highlights from those chapters. This book recounts my journey through the '40s (school), '50s (teaching), '60s (ministry and mission), '70s and '80s (renewal) and from the '90s into the 21<sup>st</sup> century (revival). Those years hold many memories of God's grace and goodness.

I remember serving Jesus cups of cold, brown, muddy tea with my sisters' plastic tea set in our cubby house when I was about five. I remember eating a whole sweet potato for dinner, straight from the ashes in the ground, and really appreciating it, after a long day's trek through two mountain gorges in New Guinea. I remember weekly communion or love feasts in a renewal group in Brisbane with real home-made bread and large glasses of sparkling grape juice. And I remember serving loaves of bread (not just symbolic cubes) for communion in a slum church in Africa, where many of them took some of the bread back to their hungry families and it multiplied, fresh for many weeks.

My sister, Elaine Olley, captured some of our family's early memories in her account of dad's pioneering Waugh-fare as an innovative church minister in his biography that she wrote, titled *By All Means*. I drew gratefully on that information as well. It sparked more memories.

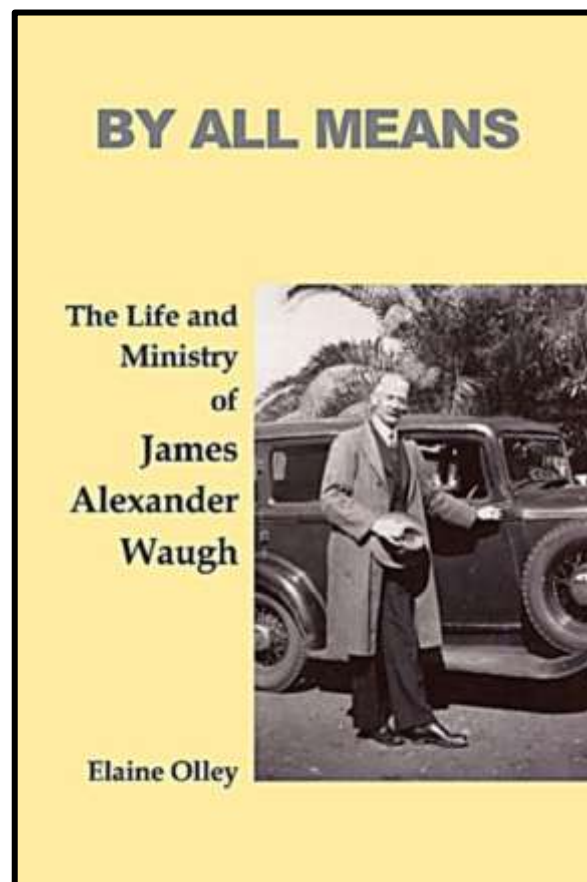
Dad's large family of nine adult children helped me also, many of us now grandparents and even great-grandparents. I've woven some of their memories into this story.

My Waugh stories survey my life's journey. Its unfolding theatres provide sequential chapters in this book. This Introduction gives an overview from which the other stories spring.

My story flows from 'the old, old story of Jesus and his love'. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). He has been central to my life. I don't know when I 'converted' to Christ and Christianity. As far as I know I always loved Jesus, and wanted to live for him even as a young boy.

I learned about Jesus from my mother's knee, and my father's pulpit. Jesus was my hero. His story gripped me, especially the stories of his love for everyone, his execution and his surprising reappearances. The story of Jesus remains the centre of the Bible, and the centre of our lives. So my story flows from his story. My parents taught and lived that, and gave me that strong foundation.

Jesus remains our rock solid foundation in a changing world. He is timeless, eternal. Our times and lives change, and my chapters tell something of those changes.



*By All Means*

[www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)

## 1. Beginnings: state of origin

The popular State of Origin football teams in Australia field players representing the state where they began their club careers. Mine was New South Wales, not for football but for the game of life. Dad, a Baptist minister in New South Wales (NSW), practised what he preached. As a son of the manse, I found church life normal and enjoyed it. My parents lived authentic, caring, and often innovative lives. That made life interesting for me.

Dad combined tradition with openness to new ideas. He used the King James Version of the Bible (KJV). Inside the front of his big, black-covered KJV he stuck the words, “If the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense.” Dad loved the plain sense: “God says it. I believe it. That settles it.”

For example, his Bible said, “Be fruitful and multiply.” He obeyed. I became the eldest of nine children. So I enjoyed various privileges and opportunities first, but also helped with the constantly growing tribe. Our expanding family fulfilled a living litany in each of dad’s five-year pastorates:

Three children lived at Arncliffe in Sydney, NSW.

Two more children arrived at Griffith in western NSW.

One more child was born at Tamworth in northern NSW.

Our mother Hilda died in Tamworth before reaching 40. Never strong, her heart gave out. I guess we all contributed to that, along with the people she sacrificially loved and served. Dad remarried in the next pastorate at Gloucester. Eileen Maude, one of the youth leaders in the church, became our second mother, a courageous, caring, capable woman. So the litany continued, slightly reduced in volume:

Two more children at Gloucester in mid-northern NSW.

One more child at Orange in western NSW.

Dad died in the next pastorate at Toronto in Newcastle, NSW, almost with his boots on. He preached at a Sunday morning service, had a stroke that afternoon, and died soon after. I suspect he would prefer to go out like that, full steam ahead while serving the Lord. So we kids all grew up in NSW country towns in our family of origin.

## 2. School: green-board jungle

I enjoyed school, found it reasonably easy, and preferred to fit in and not make waves. In fact I felt happy when left to my own devices, and uncomfortable when singled out for attention. I liked to blend into the jungle of life, unobtrusively but purposefully – leopard rather than lion.

My strong home base guided me through school as well. I wrote compositions in primary school about what we wanted to be when we grew up. Each year my goals remained the same. I wanted to be a minister and a missionary. I knew about that and admired it, even as a boy. That was my calling, I believe. So I had no desire to drive fire trucks or fly planes. They were for other heroes, not for me.

My heroes included pioneer missionaries and leaders such as David Livingstone, Mary Slessor, C T Studd, Sadhu Sundah Singh, Hudson Taylor, Florence Nightingale and others. I enjoyed reading *The Eagle Omnibus* books, a series of Christian biographies. Of course, I read Biggles too. Most post-war boys in those days grew up with the fictional wartime adventures of that flying ace. So home, church and school blended together into learning about life and God’s kingdom. It all made sense to me.

That pattern continued into high school. There I enjoyed the challenges of drama and debating. Those interests and skills transferred easily into church life, especially in youth groups. My sport was church related as well. Our youth group played tennis on Saturdays through winter and we went swimming in summer. So those became my favourite sports with my main group of friends. I found life comfortable, safe and predictable. Surprises came later.

As the eldest in a growing family I had plenty of experience in teaching life skills to younger siblings. So, for me, teaching came naturally both at home with my co-operative sisters and brothers and also at church as a teenager teaching kindergarten kids in Sunday School and leading primary school children in Junior Christian Endeavour.

Similarly, at school I enjoyed Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF) and became its president in my final year, very traditionally. Then in my later teens at Teachers College I enjoyed the interdenominational Christian Fellowship (CF) where I met keen young Christian leaders, and became its president in my final year, more adventurously than in high school.

I began primary school teaching as a teenager, and loved it. But my eyes saw full-time Christian ministry on the horizon. Teaching blended with that goal both as preparation and then later as my main ministry. That developed into a lifetime of teaching.

### **3. Ministry: to lead is to serve**

I guess it runs in our family – this business of ministry. Dad inspired us all, even though we chaffed a bit at the PK label. Preacher's Kid: "You can't do that, you're the preacher's kid." How often we heard that, or something like it. Nevertheless, we survived, and probably grew stronger because of it. So, like my unknown 'conversion', I don't remember how my 'ministry' started. It seemed to be part of life for me, even as a boy.

We grew up always helping someone. People have needs, so you help if you can. For example, most people phone the minister a few times a month. Well, they did in those days. So by primary school age I knew how to answer the phone politely and give basic information such as the times of the next meetings. We always had meetings: 11am and 7pm every Sunday, 7.30pm every Wednesday Prayer Meeting, and 7.30pm Fridays for the youth group.

Our meetings were traditional, like most churches then. The four-hymn-sandwich provided the normal diet. Sunday School and Youth Group explored the new choruses, but we only brought them into church services at special events like anniversaries. We were 'defenders of the faith' and pretty conservative. I was a little wary of other denominations, and felt (as they probably did about their own beliefs) that we had the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so God would help us. I believed that then. Absolutely. Obviously. Unerringly.

I don't believe that now. God helps us all, fortunately, irrespective of our doctrinal distortions, which we all have. I'm glad my open-hearted parents graciously acknowledged other people's points of view, while holding very firmly to their own. Dad often instigated minister's fraternal innovations, such as giving meal docket to tramps and drunks to be exchanged for a good meal at a local café, instead of giving money to be spent on booze. The tear in dad's eye, or the compassion in mum's heart impacted us all.

School with ISCF, and Teachers College with CF helped broaden my vision and relationships. I met good friends from different churches, generally evangelical, but not only that. Committed liberal students would challenge our dogmatism and help us grow beyond our narrow bias.

Following teaching I applied for ‘the ministry’. I’m grateful for my five years of theological college. Many of our lecturers had a big view of God and his people. Many students also had wider perspectives than I did at that time. That helped me see a bigger picture. I began applying those insights in pastorates at North Epping and Narrabeen in Sydney and Arian Park in country NSW. Ministry in NSW led to further ministry in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

#### **4. Mission: trails and trials**

Time in PNG as a missionary teacher widened my horizons even more, from the very first Sunday in a village church. Dirt floor and no seats. Grass roof and bamboo walls. Hens and piglets hanging in grass-fibre string nets (bilums) from the bamboo walls. Unwashed, hot bodies. Native dress. Preacher in nothing but a dirty lap-lap (sarong). No four-hymn sandwich there! Best of all, only one church in a village, in the early days. Western denominations had not divided the community along historic, doctrinal lines. We were one body in Christ. In reality, of course, we are one body in Christ anyway, and will be one forever. Imagine that!

I felt like a liberated kid, let out of school. New vistas tumbled into view among those towering highland ranges. Church was the community worshipping and working together, every day. No Sunday best in dress or manners – just life as normal. I evolved from using ancient English in scripture and prayer to the common language, theirs and mine. Casual dress always. Classes included sitting under the bamboos telling stories, village style. That changed me. My perspectives changed for good: that is, they both changed forever, and they changed for the better.

I’m grateful to the mission staff. They knew their anthropology and missiology. Senior staff curbed my tendencies to export Western Aussie church traditions into that culture. I learned to ask questions more than give answers. Usually the best answers came from the pastors in the villages. They knew their people and their culture better than we ever would. They followed the biblical patterns of communal life better than we did. They understood the spirit-world and revival more than we had experienced it ourselves.

We enjoyed interaction with missionaries from other areas and denominations. I participated in many conferences and training courses with them, and worked closely with some of the Methodists in Christian Education. I needed PNG more than PNG needed me. Life there helped me to understand more fully the culture of the Bible, the truths of Scripture, and the limitless possibilities of Christian living. I’m grateful.

#### **5. Family: Waughs and rumours of Waughs**

I met Meg in PNG. We both taught in schools there. We taught youths and adults as well as children. I started new schools as a single man living out in the village. At weekends I visited the mission school where Meg was teaching. I would “climb ev’ry mountain, ford ev’ry stream, follow ev’ry rainbow” till I found my dream. That included Meg, a wonderful, faithful, perceptive, caring, loving partner. We married on furlough in Sydney, and returned to teach in Bible Schools in the isolated highlands of PNG.

There our first daughter, Lucinda, arrived vigorously in the one room European ward of the mission hospital. The first Sunday back at a village church all the women wanted to nurse her. We found it hard to get her back from them. Now she and David have their own family of three wonderful children, enriching my life with every visit together.

Back in Australia on furlough we welcomed our son, Jonathan, born in Sydney. Within months he joined our perpetually travelling family in the drive north to Brisbane. He and Phyllis are parents to three charming children, the eldest being married in December 2018, and Jonathan designed our current home.

In Brisbane our third child, Melinda, arrived to complete the trio often mistaken as triplets when they were young. She and Reuben have two gorgeous girls and their family also live in the house that Jonathan and Reuben built. So I enjoy living with family at this time of writing, living in the granny flat.

Our children grew up in community. While they progressed successfully through primary and high school we lived in community with others. Our friends who sold us a weatherboard Queenslander home had raised it to accommodate people in extra rooms. So for many years we helped or worked with others, living together. At one crowded time more than a dozen of us lived in our home. We had no lack of adventures then, including long discussions on how to handle the garbage – literal and personal.

My formal teaching evolved through primary school classes, to children's and adult education in PNG, to Bible and Theological Colleges in Brisbane, across many denominations. I saw the spectrum of the body of Christ in many theological colours, and liked it. It added richness and vitality to my own life. Maybe it's God's humour, for I worked in many denominations as a Baptist minister in a wide range of non-Baptist jobs.

Meg shared that journey. A brilliant teacher, she could subdue an unruly class or student or child or husband with one look. Like her family, her students loved and respected her. She trained in high school Maths and English but usually taught Maths in girls' schools, then taught basic primary education in PNG, and then taught Maths again followed by School Counselling in Queensland.

Meg died in 2002 leaving a gaping hole in our lives. God, and time, heal the pain of loss. Meg's unique blend of creativity and compassion, wit and wisdom, gentleness and goodness, continue to shine in our children and in our children's children. Our adult children and their children will no doubt tell their own stories in their own way, so I just touch a little on that in my story. It could be a whole book on its own – fascinating, lively, unexpected, adventurous, fulfilling and full of divine grace.

## **6. Search and Research: begin with A B C**

“When you read you begin with A B C” and then you write it and use it. All my life that process developed from early beginnings into further study and publications. Meg and I shared that journey as teachers, missionaries, and leaders in church life. Search and you will find, but not always what you expect! That quest included our whole family visiting Israel, a mind-blowing adventure of biblical proportions.

After teaching in schools and Bible Schools in PNG, I taught Christian Education with the Methodist Church in Queensland in parishes and in their Bible College. Then the Methodists merged with Presbyterians and Congregationalists to form the Uniting Church. Their lay training college united with their theological college, so I found myself on the faculty of the Uniting Church Theological College for a decade. More of God's humour, I guess.

I worked ecumenically as a Baptist minister from a Uniting Church base. We explored the cutting edge of educational developments, including many adventurous innovations. For

example, I found myself teaching about renewal and revival to students from Catholic, Anglican, Uniting, and Pentecostal colleges.

The Christian Outreach Centre invited me to write their government submission for a Bachelor of Ministry degree in Christian Heritage College. I joined the visionary staff there to teach subjects including courses on revival and the Holy Spirit. That became creative and revolutionary, a bold step forward. Pentecostals, for a century, looked on higher education with suspicion, or opposition. Many warned that seminaries became cemeteries. So there I was in the thick of it, helping to raise the dead. Seminaries can be seminal, powerfully influential, as under God they should be.

My work included duplicating, photocopying and publishing through 50 years. That involved me in academic study applied in ministry. So while working full-time, I worked my way through education and ministry courses, and sometimes wondered if I was killing myself by degrees. I chose study routes that enriched my ministry. Most of my study also became ministry, producing research, publications and resources on renewal and revival.

My research churned out innumerable papers, articles and submissions – often controversial. We graduated from manual typewriters to electronic typewriters, to computer keyboards, and from DOS and floppy disks to Windows and CDs and DVDs. Our ABCs developed into WWWs such as in the [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) - my website on renewal and revival.

## **7. Renewal: begin with doh rey me**

Renewal is God pouring out his Spirit, personally and in churches. He renews us.

Renewal and revival flow from the story of Jesus and his love. God's love, revealed in Jesus transforms our lives by his Spirit. Like good theology, it produces doxology, that is, worship. You may begin with a song like 'Jesus loves me' but soon you add many variations and harmonies. "When you sing you begin with doh, rey, me", and you move on into more glorious harmonies and even glimpses of heaven's eternal worship.

Renewal is more than singing, of course, but in worship we see its impact clearly. Renewal helped change worship from traditional hymns to contemporary, creative styles. That worship invaded our personal lives. It produced a new wave of cassettes, CDs and DVDs, many new kinds of home groups and small groups, as well as transforming congregational worship. It liberated worship from pre-packaged concerts (inspiring as they can be) to Spirit-led creativity (even with thousands involved).

Renewal was not a common term in my youth, unless it meant helping dad renew the worn out lino floor coverings that sat on top of old newspapers telling the history of its last laying. The renewing power of God's Spirit did become a common focus from the seventies. I had returned from PNG, and began to explore current trends in the church and community including discoveries of life in the Spirit.

Renewal challenged my thinking and my understanding of the Bible. Gifts of the Spirit. Power for mission. Healings. Signs and wonders. New Testament Christianity. Early church life rediscovered today. These came alive in new ways.

Renewal was ecumenical and charismatic. We rediscovered that God's Spirit cannot be tied to our denominational boxes no matter how impressive the wrapping. As Jesus said, new wine bursts old wineskins.

Renewal involved working with leaders from many denominations. Like salvation, it is



available to everyone in every denomination. We produced resources and led ecumenical renewal meetings. I even led weekly charismatic services in Wesley Central Mission in Brisbane, the cathedral of Methodism in Queensland. We invited speakers from all streams, Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal.

Renewal saw people of all churches being filled with the Spirit, discovering spiritual gifts, and doing what they may not have done before. For example, we began to pray more expectantly for healings of all kinds – physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, relational and social.

Renewal changed me, and others. It often changes churches as God's Spirit floods us and spills over into rivers of revival in the community. "Streams of living water," said Jesus, describing the Holy Spirit in us and flowing from us.

## **8. Revival: begin with 1 2 3**

Revival is God pouring out his Spirit abundantly. That cannot remain within one church, or even within a group of churches. It changes lives, homes, churches and societies. It floods into unlimited personal and church growth. When you count you begin with 1, 2, 3 (as in conversions), but in revival you are counting 1,000 or 2,000 or 3,000 (as in one day at Pentecost, and now in some local churches) or on to 1 million or 2 million or 3 million, as in national revival movements.

I read about revivals all my life. I found it in those missionary biographies I absorbed as a boy. Reports from missionaries sometimes included revival stories. It was certainly normal in the book of Acts and the New Testament.

So I lived with a puzzle or paradox. We believed in revival but rarely experienced it. It happened somewhere else such as in Africa or China, or in some other age as in the early church or the eighteenth century. Why not now?

Gradually my study unearthed surprising revelations. I discovered that in the last 50 years we have lived through the greatest revivals in human history, far greater in numbers and impact than local revivals in the history books.

I began to write about that. Revival included church growth in Africa from 10% of the population in 1900 to over 50% now, in spite of and perhaps because of persecution and genocide. Underground revival in China in the last 50 years grew from one million Christians to over 100 million Christians estimated now.

Another conundrum! Traditional churches in the West declined while independent, charismatic and Pentecostal churches exploded all over the globe. What are we missing? Revival.

After I retired at 65, and continued teaching part-time, I began exploring revivals more consistently. Previously I had seen strong moves of God during short-term missions in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Now I have time to see more, and I received invitations to teach pastors and leaders about revival.

It surprised me. Revival seemed unexpected and problematical. In most places it began among youth or even with the children. I saw that in Africa, Nepal, China and in the Pacific. Revival leaders were young! Youth and children had visions of Jesus, angels, heaven, hell and the spiritual state of their families. They prayed for the sick and saw many healed. They evangelized in their villages and schools with joyful zeal. Sometimes in their new enthusiasm for righteousness, like Gideon they destroyed their parents' idols, artefacts or magic items and

stirred up hornets' nests. Whole communities changed. Revival transformation has become a major development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **Conclusion: begin with you and me**

So where is all this going? I don't know, but I love discovering what God is doing in all the earth – and we only know a tiny bit of that. We usually learn about it years after it happens.

Each chapter of my journey into renewal and revival begins with my discoveries about Jesus. Then the chapter explores how that impacted my life and my journey into further dimensions of God's purposes.

So this book's title is both a description and invitation. The story describes my journey into renewal and revival, and also invites you to journey into renewal and revival.

Your story is different, very different. But the eternal truths are the same. So I encourage you to avoid the following traps as you read my story.

1. Follow Jesus, not me. Follow Jesus' example, not mine. You are unique, and so are your calling and gifting. Many people I work with are not called to preach or teach, but they serve God powerfully, anointed by his Spirit. Ask him to fill you, even while you read this book. That's a prayer he loves to answer.

2. You don't need a strong Christian background to serve the Lord. It does help, but it can hinder as well. Many of us who grew up in the church follow church traditions and beliefs more than we follow Jesus and his Spirit. We have much to unlearn! Many people I know discovered renewal and revival without a church background and moved boldly in New Testament lifestyles more quickly than I did.

3. Remember that God forgives all our sin, not just some of it. We all fail. I do not focus on my failures in my journey, although I mention some. For example, I found it easy to be bound by my traditions, I did not always live up to my beliefs, and I did not relate easily to unbelievers, unlike Jesus. Fortunately, his blood makes us clean from all our sin. Many powerful leaders have failed, repented, and discovered much more of God's grace. Sometimes, those forgiven the most, love God the most. They are so grateful. We can all be grateful. Trusting in Jesus, you too are forgiven and set free. Live in that freedom.

4. Let Scripture be your guide. We have different theologies, but one Bible. The Holy Spirit inspired it, and reveals it to us. Your theology will throw some light on the Bible, but our theologies are limited, distorted and usually Western. Influenced by Western world views, we may be suspicious or unbelieving about supernatural healings and miracles, revelations and visions, the spirit world and casting out spirits, or living as Jesus did in intimate relationship with his Father, constantly led by the Spirit. He calls us to follow him, not just our traditions. Where those traditions help us to love and follow him, that's wonderful.

I believe that *the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea* (Habakkuk 2:14). Dive in! Great currents can carry you beyond the shallows into the depths of the ocean of God's love and his mighty purposes.

# Chapter 1

## Beginnings: state of origin



***Geoff's family of origin:*** baby Geoff with mum, family at Gloucester with mum Eileen Maude, family with Frank, parents Hilda and Jim, *Eternity* on Sydney Harbour Bridge, 1 January 2000

After early childhood in busy Sydney, I grew up in country towns, with fresh air and wide open spaces around us. Our state of origin for my family-of-origin of nine children is New South Wales (NSW) where Dad ministered. All our family have strong Christian foundations, and I'm grateful.

Songs and hymns such as "Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so" and "Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and his love," shaped my childhood and my life. The old, old story is also the new, new story, more up to date than tomorrow's newspapers. That story changes lives every day.

Picture books and stories of Jesus captivated me. Now I realise that his Spirit called me, touched me, even then. As a kid, I just thought the stories of Jesus were my favourite stories.

I knew him and loved him. He was there in all the picture story books – white European, tall, long brown hair and blue eyes (or maybe brown), dazzling white garments (in dusty Palestine with mobs touching him every day!), peaceful, and loving. My favourite poster picture showed him sitting on a rock in a brilliant white robe with children of the nations gathered around him, sitting on his knee, resting at his feet and standing nearby. That robe must have been miraculous to stay so white! Most films still show him like that, serene and clean.

What a man! He was a kind of superman or super hero to me. He could do anything – feed 5,000 with a boy's lunch, raise a girl from death, stop a storm, walk on water and rescue Peter from drowning.

Yet, he was so meek! He let them capture him, like Aslan on the stone table, being taunted and shaved of his glory and majesty. He died a shameful, agonising death spiked to a cross. Yet, he reappeared mysteriously – only to his friends. Still rather meek (hidden) and mild (comforting) but with great power and authority.

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," we children sang. As I grew older the picture changed. Jesus confronting me from the Bible seemed more like **Granite Jesus, wondrous and wild**. The lion of Judah roars! Aslan is no tame lion.

"Every year you grow you will find me bigger," said Aslan to Lucy in *Prince Caspian*. I found that too.

Jesus in the gospels is more passionate, more moved emotionally and more spontaneous than everyone else. He loved more than we can, forgave more than we do, and he was more righteous, more authoritative, and more dynamic than we are.

He also had human needs. He became weary, even worn out as when he slept in the storm, exhausted after a busy day. He needed time out, especially to pray. So many came for help he often had no time to eat. His friends let him down, often. Yet, he kept on doing his Father's will.

No single picture or version of him can fully capture the vastness of his inexpressible glory. Who can express the inexpressible or describe the indescribable? We glimpse facets, and each facet is dazzling. Each facet reflects brilliant colours of the eternal, blazing Light.

The more I knew him, and I know him so little still, the more fascinated I became. He's really worth living for and even worth dying for, although I don't choose martyrdom as one of my spiritual gifts or goals!

I learned more about Jesus everywhere we went.

## **Arncliffe, 1941-1947**

Born in 1937, before World War II, my earliest memories include war-time events at Arncliffe in Sydney.

We lived close enough to Sydney airport to hear the planes. One crashed there during the war bursting into a ball of flame. We children hid under the table for protection if those 'bombers' flew low over us.

We blacked out our homes, with blinds drawn showing no outside lights. I remember our ration coupons, and eating lots of bread and dripping. Occasionally mum flavoured it with roast meat juices. We ate plenty of sausage rolls, mince and more mince (best in Shepherds' Pie – lucky shepherds!) and dampers with Golden Syrup, called Cockey's Joy. Its container shone with a bright picture of some cockatoos. I never understood why cockatoos would like Golden Syrup, but it sweetened and softened my dampers.

World War II of 1939-1945 ended with wild celebrations and newspapers filled with photos of returning service personnel (servicemen in those days). I remember the holiday we had from school to celebrate the end of the war, a day full of sirens and whistles and fog horns ceaselessly blaring all over the city and harbour. I was seven.

Home felt safe and secure. Dad had migrated from Scotland as a small boy. His mother sailed to Australia after her husband died. She sought a new life for her young family of six surviving children. The seventh, a baby girl, died at sea leaving my dad, Jim, the youngest. Grandmother died when I was one. Both of dad's parents had strong faith, rooted in Presbyterian teaching and Salvation Army zeal.

My mum also grew up in a Christian family. They attended the evangelical Baptist Church in Carlton, Sydney, where she met dad, a strong-minded, red-head carpenter. During the depression of the thirties he found various jobs including owning a small-goods shop near the railway station. Mum, then Hilda Willis, helped in the shop. They married on Boxing Day, 1936. Dad joked that they had been boxing ever since. Although strong minded Waughs, they lived in peace and gave us a home filled with harmony and music. I arrived a year later, and my first sister Elaine a year after that.

I liked visiting grandpa and nanna, mum's parents. They loved to spoil us, their only grandchildren. I could get whatever I wanted from them, anytime. Grandpa smoked a pipe, typical for his peers but unusual for a Baptist. He had the thick, bushy moustache common then, black but mottled with grey, which felt like a bristle brush. Dad had one too, but thinner, softer and ginger.

My parents refused to trade on Sundays, so eventually they sold the shop and dad found other jobs including taking us to Wagga Wagga in western NSW. He worked as a debt collector, and also founded the Baptist Church there, starting with meetings in our home. Then the Arncliffe Church in Sydney called him to be their pastor. We lived there during and after the war.

As in some other pastorates, we lived in two different manses (the minister's home) at Arncliffe. First we had a rented house until we moved into one on the expanded church property. I would ride my tricycle to the front gate in our first manse to watch the big boys from school ride their billy-carts down the middle of the road on the hilly street outside our house. Billy-carts were fascinating, home-made contraptions built from a butter-box nailed to a plank with pram or toy wheels, the front ones on a swivelling cross piece guided by a rope tied to each side. Very few cars appeared in our side street in those days, but if they did

you could hear them chugging a block away.

My next sister Hazel arrived then. I was happy, and proud to be big brother. We children felt secure and we remember our mum keeping us clean and well fed and dad tightly tucking us into bed, making a canoe shape of the mattress to keep us snug every night.



Later we moved into the brick house next door to the brick church building. We had the run of the churchyard (no cemetery) as well as our own yard. Dad made a cubby house for us and in our imaginary games we served Jesus cups of tea (muddy water with sand sugar – so I suppose he turned it into tea, not wine). We were the hosts, David and Judy, using our play names. I knew that Jesus was always there,

like an invisible man. It seemed natural to interact with him, even then.

The open-air rock and stone pulpit in the church yard gave me all the props I needed to conduct church services for my sisters, baptising them in the dust. No sprinkling of dust for us, as we Baptists buried candidates. Fortunately for my sisters I could not use dad's shovels and tools.

As a pre-school minister's kid, I discovered that if I went to the church kitchen after the service on communion Sundays, the nice ladies washing up the glasses would kindly give me some of the left-over grape juice to drink. Children, in those days, did not share in communion as mine did a generation later, enjoying the renewing freedom we found. Dad felt we would not understand. But I understood that I could get a drink of it anyway, afterwards.

When I returned to that church building in my twenties it seemed to have shrunk to a dolls' house size, in comparison with my memories of its vastness! I then discovered that the fancy gothic-style designs painted beautifully on the front wall above the pulpit actually said, 'Reverence my Sanctuary'.

Dad took the train across Sydney to attend the morning classes at the theological college at Ashfield, the same building my Uncle Frank (mum's brother) and I lived in a generation later. We appreciated the devotional warmth and wisdom of the same Principal who taught dad, Principal GH Morling.

I enjoyed dad's children's stories in the morning church service. I could understand them. During the sermons I looked at Bible picture books, or made shapes with my ironed white handkerchief, or discovered old chewing gum stuck under the wooden pews.

Dad's preaching, I discovered later, was forthright and uncompromising, as he was. He taught exegetically, explaining Bible passages, applied to life. He did nothing half-heartedly. He often helped people in need, and roped in people to help him.

Dad, the carpenter, built everywhere we lived. At Arncliffe he erected a church hall, built from a dismantled army hut. We often saw him wielding a hammer and saw and working with a team of church volunteers. How he fitted in four years of college study with all he did beats me. Mum helped, including typing notes for the students.

Mum led the Kindergarten Sunday School and one of her teachers drew and made cardboard models to illustrate the story each week. I played with the dough in a cardboard basket we received for the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000, and multiplied those dough buns and fishes into many, many pieces until the dough crumbled.

My earliest memories of school include my mother coming to take our denominational Scripture classes using cardboard models, or a sand tray Bible scene, or a model in coloured

plasticine to illustrate the story. We sang choruses with actions such as “Wide, wide as the ocean, high as the heaven above, deep, deep as the deepest sea, is my Saviour’s love.”

School introduced us to childhood diseases such as mumps and chicken pox, which we shared rapidly and unwillingly together. We had our tonsils removed, a common practice in those days. I remember feeling suffocated with the awful smelling anaesthetic sprayed onto a mask held firmly over my nose and mouth. We woke to the promise of ice cream, only to discover it really hurt to swallow it. What an unkind cut!

Two of the Arncliffe young people became very good friends of our family, Dulcie Barrett (nee Cheney) later going to India as a missionary nurse, and Evelyn Cunningham (nee Hines) later a missionary teacher in Borneo. They had a strong impact on my life and values. All through my boyhood and beyond we followed their adventures with letters, photos and mission displays. Mum kept photo albums filled with small black and white photos, many taken with our black box Brownie camera. Mum fastened them into the dark grey or brown cardboard photo albums with neat dark brown or silver corner stickers. The glue on those corners tasted delightful.

Dulcie became like a big sister to us, and a strong member of our extended family. She recalls mum’s lasting influence in her life, as it was for many others:

I remember her as someone with a strong character – the shade of gray had not been invented in her time; unselfish, loving, an encourager, home lover, husband supporter, wise mother.

On Tuesday nights the young people had tea at the manse – maybe a dozen of us, and while tea was being got ready and afterwards we sang around the piano. She was no mean pianist – sometimes she would sing the alto part.

Just before she died she had begun to speak at ladies meetings. This was something she found very difficult and when the meeting was over she felt completely drained. I loved her brown eyes and thick black hair. I loved her children as if they were mine. I remember one day a friend (Joy Newcombe) and I took them for a trip to Sydney in a train. Goodness knows why I have this particular memory. I remember Geoff asking her, “Do all boys and girls have a Dulcie?” Was it a complement or not?

It was a compliment. Our church community included big sisters and brothers in the church who loved us and cared for us, sowing seeds of community living later on. Eventually Dulcie married Don, after each of them had served God in different spheres of ministry. He adds:

I remember your mother as a loving wife and subject to her husband. One who loved the piano and singing with the young people around the piano. A gentle encourager and mentor for young people in spiritual living. I recall her as if yesterday pointing out to me that the words “Gosh” and “Gee” were corruptions of the Holy Name. I must have used one in an exclamation one day in the manse for she spoke to me immediately. I thank God that from that time those words rarely if ever escaped my lips.

Those young people in the churches where dad ministered had a strong influence on my life. They provided examples of vigorous Christian living and of selfless service as so many of them chose to follow the Lord however and wherever he led.

Mum studied the piano since she was little, and played like an angel. She passed her

exams for her letters but was too nervous to play the required recital in public so never achieved her A.Mus.A. She battled that fear all her life, and declined an invitation to speak to the women at the denomination's annual assembly because she was too nervous. That is why she never learned to drive our car. I share some of that retiring nature, but paradoxically also share dad's enjoyment of preaching.

However, mum did play hymns and choruses in church and Sunday School and with the youth groups in all our churches. I especially loved relaxing in our lounge chairs to listen to her play hymns with variations that rippled up and down the keyboard, such as 'Nearer my God to Thee' and 'In the sweet bye and bye'. As the family grew bigger she had less time and energy for those wonderful after-dinner family recitals. Mum told us that the polished wooden legs at the front of her piano bore the teeth marks of her little children feeling the vibes of her music.

After the war and following dad's graduation from theological college we moved to his next church appointment in a big, adventurous train journey to Griffith in western NSW. My grandparents and some people from the church came to the noisy central train station in Sydney to see us off on the steam train. We waved good-bye excitedly as the whistle blew and the train slowly pulled out in clouds of white smoke. Then I wondered why my mum was crying when it was such a wonderful adventure. I didn't realise I would never see grandma again. She died when we were at Griffith.

## Griffith, 1947-1951

We moved into a rented house in the dusty red-brown plains of the Murrumbidgee River irrigation area at Griffith in far western NSW, and saw many dust storms. If you were brave or mad enough you could stand out in the massive clouds of dust but you had to hold your breath and jam your eyes shut – then run for the door to get inside to breathe. I did that occasionally, mixing adventure with caution.



Soon dad was building again. Another army hut became the manse next door to the church and we moved in, after first living a few blocks from the church. Later again dad and his team added other church halls to the buildings on the lot. That large corner block provided plenty of playing space for us children, including the church tennis court and parking area. We had plenty of room to play and ride our bikes.

"You were being big brother," remembered my sister Elaine, "teaching me to ride a *boys'* bike without teaching me how to dismount." Ouch!

Two more children, Graeme and Heather, arrived to add excitement to our family life. I could push them around in their prams or in my billy-cart that I also used to collect horse manure off the roads for our veggie garden!

We lived mostly in country towns, so church people regularly augmented dad's small income with fruit and veggies. Every weekend the larder filled and we could eat as much of the fruit and pumpkin as we liked. We preferred our pumpkin mixed with 'smashed' potatoes or in home-made soup.

Many things were home-made, including ginger beer, as the mottled ceiling testified until cleaned again. At school in craft I learned to make some useful items such as woven bags.



They made handy presents for the steadily increasing numbers of our family birthdays, or for Christmas presents.

Dad taught me to use a .22 calibre rifle to shoot the abundant rabbits in the nearby countryside, a source of cheap meat. I felt like a champion because I could hit those targets among the plentiful burrows. We also set traps in the dusty entrances to the burrows, but I didn't like using them as they seemed cruel, and I certainly didn't want my hand to get caught in one. I was glad to leave the skinning and cleaning to dad and the cooking to mum, but enjoyed the meat.

I joined the Junior Farmers club at primary school in that farming district and qualified because I grew vegetables for the family in our backyard - a tiny contrast to other boys from huge fruit or wheat and sheep farms. Dad kept fowls to breed chickens for eggs and meat. So we kids fed the chooks and collected the eggs that we could find.

During the afternoons the chooks could range free in our yard between the manse at the front, church hall to the right, the neighbour's fence to the left and the chicken coop across the back of the yard. So eggs hid everywhere. We tested their age, on finding them, by a good shake, and delighted in smashing old, rattling rotten eggs on the dirt behind an unsuspecting sibling. I had more to learn about being a gentleman, not a scallywag.

I never entered my produce in the annual country show, as some of my friends did, but my teacher did enter some of our school paintings. I remember throwing away my sixpences trying unsuccessfully to land one in a small glass bowl to get as a present for mum from a sideshow stall. The lady operator took pity on me and let me know I'd be more successful and better off buying one at Woolworths!

Our growing family kept surprisingly healthy. I never remember going to a doctor when I was young, apart from operations like tonsils or to repair accident damage. Dad spent money only on essentials and he believed strongly in self-help remedies. If we were sick we swallowed Castor Oil, or adults took Bex powder. Later on, perhaps because we all objected so vigorously to the Castor Oil, he used butter heated with honey and lemon juice.

Dad or mum rubbed Vicks onto our chests if we had a cold, although we sometimes had to breathe steam with Friar's Balsam drops in it, under a towel draped over our head. I remember the sting of hot Bates Salve used on boils. Shaped as a rectangular stick, it contained a mercuric compound effective as a drawing ointment. Dad warmed the brown wax-like salve over a match flame to melt it and applied it to the boil. It stung. Now internet remedies say that fatty bacon applied overnight will bring a boil to a head - much less painful!

My active recreation included climbing the three stately kurrajong trees along the fence in our back yard, also the source of many a cut or graze. I had a favourite one where I could sit on a board in a fork of the tree beyond the reach of my siblings. There I enjoyed my peace and quiet, pondering about good and evil in the adventures of Donald Duck or Superman or Archie. Dad never allowed us to waste money on comics, so I learned to swap with friends. I think dad admired any such initiative or enterprise. However, dad did buy my favourite comic, the thick, colourful *Illustrated Life of Jesus* drawn in comic style.

A hermit lived in a cave in the hills close to town, and I would sometimes ride my bike there to wander around his paths and beautiful rock gardens. He usually kept out of sight, but seemed kind, and friendly to children. Life was generally much safer in those days than now. Our hermit's long unkempt beard reminded me of an Old Testament prophet.

My own hair grew thick, fast and curly, hence my schoolboy nickname Curly. No amount of Brylcreem would slick it down like other boys' tidy hair with a straight part. My

hair just sprang back up. So we settled for the brush-back style. That worked, and still does.

We kids rode our bikes for miles. Yes, we had miles then, as well as pints, quarts and gallons of milk. The milkman led his draft horse and cart from house to house very early in the morning. We put out our milk billycan to get our gallon of milk, ladled from his huge thick aluminium milk cans. We left out the money overnight in the billycan, maybe a pound note (about two dollars) or the correct shillings and pence.

I had a favourite penny bank, a large penny-shaped bronze plastic ‘penny’, with the king’s head on one side and a kangaroo on the other. Our parents taught us to save pocket money, and give a tenth to God. That gave us early training in maths, accounting and stewardship. At Sunday School, during the offering we sang, “Hear the pennies dropping, listen while they fall. Every one for Jesus, He shall have them all.”

Although I wasn’t sure how Jesus got them to Africa, I did know the church treasurer organised that because he counted the money in the church office. I didn’t realise some of it went to my dad, or maybe I’d have doubled my efforts! In fact, when I began teaching I was earning more as a single man than my dad did with his large family, and it was easy then to give a tenth to the local church, more to missions, and some to dad as well. But that started with pennies from my pocket money.

I learned to see life from a biblical perspective. So I was glad to invest in God’s kingdom any way that I could. Even as a boy I knew that contributing to God’s kingdom made good investments, with eternal dividends – although I couldn’t explain it that way. I just knew that giving to God had eternal results somehow.

We never bought birthday cards or Christmas cards. We made them. So I graduated from a page torn from an old exercise book, folded in half with *Happy Birthday* on the front and *I love you* inside, to many creative versions. In fact, producing creative cards provided much of the fun. I began experimenting with different shapes such as Christmas trees and birthday cakes, and included some original verse, or worse.

I collected autographs in my small autograph book with coloured pages. We had many visitors, and their comments often encouraged or inspired me. Mum wrote, “*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good*” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). She lived that way with a strong, uncomplicated faith.

Dad added some original verse to my autograph book, based on Luke 5:4, “Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.” He concluded it with typical ancient English: “God’s promise is faithful, He provideth for you, Leave distant shallows, the deep beckons you.”

I was nine then. I didn’t grasp it all, but glimpsed the significance of my parents’ words, because they lived them. So I kept those fountain pen inscriptions.

Another hobby for me was the piano. I enjoyed it, particularly because our mother could play so well. I actually enjoyed playing my scales, and learned to play the school songs from the back of the monthly school magazine.

One of dad’s big enterprises was our first car, a square ’36 Dodge with running boards and a back rack that carried his hand-made tool box, occasionally emptied of tools to carry picnic goods. Originally it was dark blue, but that showed up the red-brown dust too much, so dad painted it yellow. I travelled with him to mission meetings and sang solos as a young soprano.

We sang at home around the piano learning new songs and choruses or singing favourites. But we spent most of our time at home in the kitchen. Our large kitchen with the big wood-

burning fuel stove and the sink and benches became the hub of our home life. We children rarely used the lounge room. The adults used that for conversations with church people. The kitchen stayed warm with the smell of cooking on the fuel stove and warm-hearted with our parents and friends milling around constantly. We sometimes joined those adults gathered in the warm kitchen.

“I remember one time at Griffith,” Elaine recalls, “we had some visitors staying and I was allowed to stay up and sit around the fuel stove with them and drink hot water (and pretend I liked it).”

After meals at the large kitchen table Dad read stories from the gospels in his big KJV Bible following breakfast, and read more stories from Theodora Wilson Wilson’s *Through the Bible* after dinner at night. I enjoyed both, although I did wonder about the double Wilson name. I loved the many full-page paintings in the book.

Dad prayed after the reading, always in ancient English. It was our prayer language then. Later on, as we grew, we children took turns in praying after the reading. I found those prayers a little more interesting as we children fumbled around trying to master the ancient English! I learned that language well. It was my Bible, prayer and hymn language for 30 years. I grew out of it in PNG where current, clear English made more sense.

Bible teaching and daily life all mixed together for me. Words painted on the front inside wall of the Griffith church said “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). Not encouraging for a restless boy! But challenging.

I vividly remember the ‘second coming’ movies dad used on Sunday nights, and I can still see the white robed multitudes silently gliding upwards to the sound of a faraway last trumpet. I may have imagined that too vividly from my boy’s perspective. After hearing so many of my dad’s fiery ‘second coming’ messages on Sunday nights (before I dropped off to sleep on a blanket and pillow on the pew), I once said, “I’ll just hang on to mum’s dress when she starts going up.”

Then one awful day I arrived home from school first and no one was anywhere to be found. That never happened. Mum was always there, even if dad couldn’t be, although he usually was too. For an agonising half-hour I truly believed I had been left behind after all. Then others started arriving home too, to my enormous relief. Dad and mum and the babies had been out visiting, as they often did, but had been unexpectedly delayed.

I enjoyed Sunday School and Junior Christian Endeavour. We kept learning interesting information from the Bible. And I liked Life Boys, the junior version of Boys’ Brigade, with its uniforms and drills – similar to Boy Scouts and quite popular in the post war years. I liked the camps best, sleeping in tents, playing boisterous games, making damper and stew (we called spew), and cooking marshmallows around the nightly campfire while leaders told us stories of biblical or contemporary heroes, as well as scary tales.

Sex education fell to the church in those days. Parents avoided it, including mine. But dad had a way around that. He and the ministers’ fraternal arranged for interdenominational ‘father and son’ and ‘mother and daughter’ nights at a local church, led by specialist Christians from Sydney. They showed us films about birds and bees, and sperm and eggs. I went with dad when I was in primary school, perhaps a little too early. I remember it was like a biology lesson about frog’s eggs and tadpoles, so I got it a bit mixed up at first. When I went again in high school it made more sense.

At about 10, I asked dad to baptise me. Believer’s baptism by immersion is part of our beliefs and discipleship. Even our church architecture reflects it. We always had a baptistery

in the church, usually under the floor, uncovered for baptismal services. Those services always impacted me.

Dad said I was too young to fully understand what I was doing, so advised me to wait till I was a teenager. I think he got that one wrong! I read the popular little book *Seven Reasons for Believer's Baptism* and thought I understood them all. However I was too young to convince dad, so waited. As soon as I turned 13 I asked again, and it was okay. I guess I did understand more then. You can learn a lot in three years!

Everyone in our tradition remembers his or her baptism. In those days we dressed in white, including socks! It represented holiness or purity, like a bride's white dress. We publicly acknowledged that we belonged to God. Before we were 'buried' under the water, symbolically dying to the old life and rising to the new, we affirmed that we believed in Jesus as our personal Lord and Saviour.

It's powerful. I remember taking a deep breath (with an audible gasp), holding it as dad plunged me into the swirling water, and coming up feeling fresh, clean and wet. Someone always had a large towel ready to wrap around the emerging disciple. The towel hid the transparent white from the congregation!

Most people being baptised gave their testimony before their baptism. They told how they got converted or why they chose to get baptised. Testimonies could be a little like the evangelical version of an X-rated movie. Once I was bad, now I'm not! Once I was blind, but now I can see. An exaggerated example would be something like, "I used to lie and cheat and even steal, and I sank to the depths of depravity, but I repented at the age of seven and now I want to be baptised."

Testimonies enlivened not only baptisms, but other services as well, and our youth groups. However, we had guidelines. It was not a place to air your dirty laundry, but to give thanks and glory to God for his grace, mercy and love.

We enjoyed many interesting services, as well as special events such as anniversaries. At Sunday School anniversaries all the children sat on the specially erected stadium-like grand stand. We sang, gave items, and heard special speakers who used many kinds of visual aids.

I remember attending a 'Happy Hour' concert on a Sunday afternoon at the Methodist Church. My school friend Max Cole went there. At the concert in his church a little girl danced a lovely tap dance. I sat next to a lady from our church who commented, "I know it's wrong, but isn't it nice!"

I did not think tap-dancing was really a sin. Although my parents were very creative and innovative, dad seemed to me to be rather 'old school' in some of his beliefs, such as the prohibition of all dancing, movies, alcohol, smoking, tattoos, and makeup – all lumped together as sin, a common belief for many evangelicals. I suspect he would have endorsed the advice, "Don't drink, don't smoke, don't chew, And don't run with girls who do."

Dad gave me a note to take to my high school physical education teacher excusing me from dancing lessons on religious grounds. So I never did learn to dance, much to my wife's disappointment. We did manage "The grand old duke of York" at church socials! My daughter, on the other hand, has taught dance in a Christian college. How times change!

We enjoyed family holidays each January after the busy church Christmas season. At first we went to our mum's parents' holiday house at Blackheath in the Blue Mountains near Sydney. For two years running my boyhood energy got me into strife there. One year I fell down a waterfall in 'Mermaid's Cave' a mile or two down the valley from the house.

Bloodied and with a broken knuckle I returned to the house and sent my obliging but alarmed sister inside to inform my parents because we had visitors and I wanted to avoid them seeing me half dead. Another year I sliced my wrist when smashing a window that I tried to close while chasing my uncle Frank, mum's young brother. Both escapades landed me in hospital for repairs.

We never returned to that holiday home! From then on we holidayed by the sea. I managed to nearly drown only once in heavy surf, but emerged gasping and spluttering from the alarming, tumbling, churning foam and sand. I guess we kept some angels busy!

## **Tamworth, 1951-1955**



I spent most of my high school years in the progressive 'country and western' town of Tamworth in the hills of northern NSW. The church there invited dad to be the minister, so we moved once again. Dad felt that his work at Griffith was done, and someone else could take over. At Tamworth we lived in the small manse half a block from the church building, the Baptist Tabernacle.

Once again dad started building. He renovated the manse to fit in his big family, and later on he led a team of workers in building the church hall attached to the tabernacle church building. He built units at the edge of town to provide cheap housing for poor people. I remember helping to lay the floors and serving an unofficial apprenticeship in painting. My sister Elaine recounts,

At home I was conscious of my father feeding 'out of work' men and his care for those struggling financially or in other ways, to the extent of acquiring a loan and building a set of small houses from army huts a little out of town where the land must have been less costly, as well as supporting others with various needs. These houses were to be paid back interest free. This concern for the welfare of people had quite an impact on me to such an extent that as a mature age student with three growing children I studied and became a Social Worker gaining a BSW and MSW. This was the culmination of a long held dream.

At Tamworth, I continued to enjoy entertaining my younger siblings. They eventually included another lovely girl when Daphne was born. I entertained them while 'baby-sitting' by telling stories.

"Dad and mum were at a wedding," Elaine recalls, "and you were looking after us and had us sitting around the dining room table telling us ghost stories. You had us petrified and then the blind went up with a bang and we all just sat there until you made us all go outside in the dark to show us nothing was there."

Everyone did household jobs. I helped to prepare breakfast for the tribe. Dad and mum liked their cup of tea in bed first, and then they were ready for us. So I made it and took it to them while cooking the porridge that had been soaking overnight. No one liked lumpy porridge, especially dad. Later on the others graduated into those jobs.

I graduated from boyhood chores to teenage privileges, and even handed over the washing and wiping of the dishes after meals to my younger sisters, the next in line. I kept the job of washing the lino floors each Saturday. When I had been in charge at the sink, I discovered

ways to keep us all happy, often by making up imaginary versions of Bible stories and stringing them out till the pots were scrubbed and done.

Sometimes we would try to sing our way through the alphabet using choruses and hymns from 'All to Jesus I surrender' or 'Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go' or 'Away in a manger' and so on through to 'Zacchaeus was a very little man'. Mostly the chores were done before we got to Zacchaeus. I think only Q and X stumped us.

We sang a Sunday School chorus at home, to motivate and explain: "In the house and out of doors, Washing dishes, scrubbing floors, Washing, ironing, darning too, Always finding things to do. I'll do it all for Jesus (x3), He's done so much for me." It neatly correlated jobs and beliefs – saved to serve!

School was close so we rode our bikes home for lunch. That meant we could follow dad's favourite wireless program, Blue Hills. We had a big old wireless in a cabinet. It had dials that seemed to regularly pull off and disappear, so we used dad's pliers to change stations. The Davis Cup tennis had a big following then so we gathered around our wireless on the hot summer days, long before television, following the triumphs of Frank Sedgman, Lew Hoad and others.

We never 'wasted money' on newspapers, but heard the news on the wireless – another time when rowdy children had to be quiet. As teenagers we older children began reading bits of the Woman's Weekly, which arrived weekly then, not monthly. So we loyally followed the regular news of King George VI and then the enchanting young Queen Elizabeth II. My sisters helped mum with cooking and sewing ideas from the Weekly. I mowed the grass with our push mower, my gym workout.

We played black vinyl records on a portable record player, the size of a small suitcase. It had metal needles a half inch long and we screwed new ones into the arm piece for a clearer sound. Gradually we collected dozens of long-playing records especially classical orchestras, Handel's Messiah or Billy Graham choirs. The first single I bought had the 'Hallelujah Chorus' on one side and 'Worthy is the Lamb' on the other. I loved it!

Mum liked a clean, tidy home, so we kept our bedrooms neat. Visitors often dropped in, knowing they were welcome at any time. They always found the place tidy. We learned to help keep it that way, and usually appreciated it.

Our laundry copper, made of copper set in cement, needed a fire lit under it to heat it for washing the clothes each Monday by boiling them and stirring them with a big copper stick! It reminded me of making a huge clothes stew. I helped, including wringing the clothes with a roller wringer between the two cement laundry tubs. Never mix whites with colours, unless you want to change your whites to pink or purple, as I did occasionally. We used little cloth bags of 'Blue' to whiten the whites – a curious bleaching process.

We hung our washing on the long wire clotheslines stretching from the house to the back fence, propped up with long stick poles in the middle. We needed all the space available, and I think dad added extra lines, especially for all the white cloth nappies, and so many bed sheets.

We had a chip heater in our bathroom by the back verandah near the laundry. I kept it burning for warm baths. The water rarely got really hot, unless it was summer. Water spiralled around the drum-like container with a wood chip fire inside the drum. If you made a fire roar inside that heater it warmed up the water. Imagine bath time with the Waugh tribe! I appreciated being the eldest, because we usually lined up by age and shared the bath water – with extremely strong warnings about going to the toilet first. No toilet, no bath! The brick

toilet stood sentinel outside the laundry, so visits in the icy winter were speedy. Bath-time preceded bedtime, to get rid of accumulated dirt. Usually we had no time in the hectic mornings for such cumbersome ablutions anyway.



My young brother Graeme and I used the closed-in verandahs on the front and side of the small three-bedroom house for our bedrooms. One of the three inside bedrooms had to be dad's study, but it doubled as a bedroom for me for a while until dad transformed the open verandahs into two rooms. He added walls with fibro and louvers. So we boys had natural air conditioning on those verandahs, hot in summer and freezing in winter. In summer under the

corrugated iron roof, curving to the gutters at the outside of the verandahs, we sweltered on hot days. In winter I slept with thick blankets and a kapok mattress on top of me. The glass louvers let in the light, and also the cold air, especially when the icy winter winds blew. My prayers in winter broke all records for brevity.

Our parents taught us to pray on our knees by our beds before climbing in. We usually prayed pretty comprehensive prayers, certainly for little children. We learned to thank God first, confess anything drastic like poking out our tongue, then ask for what we wanted, maybe then throw in the Lord's Prayer (that was always safe and obviously a winner), then ask God to bless the family, nightly. My childhood bedtime prayers always finished with 'God bless mummy and daddy, Elaine, Hazel (from Arncliffe days), Graeme, Heather (added from Griffith days), and Daphne (added in Tamworth, and even more later on), as well as sundry other relatives such as Uncle Frank.

But on those icy winter nights in Tamworth, when the water sometimes froze in the outside pipes, this teenager worked out a telegram version for my evening prayers. It was something like, "Thanks God. Sorry for any sins. Bless everyone. Amen."

Then I discovered I could pray a lot better in a warm bed than on my knees in the freezing cold. It's better to drift off to sleep talking to God in a leisurely way, than shooting off telegrams to him, useful as they are in emergencies. It's also better to go to sleep praying than worrying about the problems of the world, like acne. I still like to pray in bed, and the acne prayers got answered long ago.

I enjoyed driving dad's car. He taught me to drive in his well-worn Ford, with its column gear stick, when I was 16. I applied for my P plates as early as possible. But I had to drive to the police station in a better car for my driving test at 17. It had a stick gear-stick on the floor. I managed it all right until stopping at a pedestrian crossing to let people walk past. Then I accelerated slowly and carefully, with the car shuddering violently.

"These old cars don't start too well in third gear, do they!" the policeman quipped. At least I didn't stall it, and passed the test. Those days, preceding indicators, you put your right hand out as far as you could before turning right, and held it upright from your elbow to indicate if you were stopping.

Helping dad was a normal part of life for me. So although I'm not naturally a handyman, I had plenty of experience in hammering thousands of two-inch nails into tongue-and-grove timber floors, then using the punch to embed them below the surface ready for sanding. We had plenty of painting to do, both in new buildings and in renovated ones. By Tamworth days, dad was installing the new fluorescent lights, said to be more economical. The connections for those tubes seemed dodgy, often needing careful adjustment to stay on, a skill

usually performed by standing on a chair on top of a table to reach it.

As I grew older I often answered the ever-ringing phone, a large, heavy black Bakelite block sitting on a shelf with the hand-piece cradled above the circular dial, so different from today's white slim-line press button versions. We never had to battle recorded messages, and could easily contact the operator if in need. Church people seemed to know that they would catch dad at home at meal times so we children, in turn, learned to screen calls during many meals interspersed with phone calls. We could answer the regular enquiries about routine events such as the when and where of church meetings.

During those teen years the furniture shank rapidly. One year I had to stand on something to see the top of the cupboards. The next year I didn't. My parents used to tower above me; now I was getting taller than my mum. I enjoyed reaching the age when, if my mum tried to smack me with the ever-present wooden school ruler, I could grab her hand and waltz her down the hall. Dad kept that ruler handy at meals, but hardly had to use it. The threat of it was enough to keep us in line, based on past experience.

We liked Bible quizzes and games both at home and in the youth group. Indeed, we accumulated a lot of Bible trivia – if anything biblical can be trivia! Some examples:

*What is the shortest chapter in the Bible?* Psalm 117. 'O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD' (That's the whole psalm, KJV, of course).

*What is the middle chapter in the Bible?* (sometimes disputed, but who's counting?) Psalm 118. Beginning and ending with: 'O give thanks unto the LORD for he is good; because his mercy endureth forever' (KJV, obviously).

*What is the longest chapter in the Bible?* Psalm 119. The stanzas of 8 verses follow the Hebrew alphabet, and all the 176 verses refer to the word of the Lord in some way.

*Who was the shortest man in the Bible?* Peter, because he slept on his watch. He beats Nehemiah (knee high).

*Who was the richest man in the Bible?* Noah, because he floated a limited company while the rest of the world was in liquidation.

Or this. *How is it that the oldest man in the Bible died before his father?* Methuselah lived 969 years. But he did die before his father. Work that out! If you can't work it out, the clear and simple answer is in the last sentence of this section of this chapter.

I became fully involved in church life and leadership especially with children and youth. Most of my friends came from the youth group and we spent time together each weekend. On Saturday afternoons, we played tennis in winter, with our wooden Frank Segman (or similar) racquets, or went swimming and diving together in summer at the council pool or at a picnic near a river. Then we shared a meal at our place followed by youth group at the church hall (again built by dad with his team of volunteers). Our youth group leaders usually made it interesting.

Leadership in that context came naturally for me, even though I am no extravert. I knew how to initiate activities and lead discussions. We all mixed together pretty well, and I enjoyed being a friend with the girls without having to pair off romantically, although people tried to match us up with one another. Some friendships lasted well beyond youth group days. Many of those lasting friendships involved full-time Christian work for some of us in different countries.

We enjoyed social events including Christmas parties, and Empire Day celebrations with bonfires and crackers on my brother's birthday, 24 May, also Queen Victoria's birthday. The



British Empire, and later the Commonwealth, celebrated his birthday with him! Often those celebrations went late with us lighting scores of our firecrackers, sparklers, Catherine wheels, Roman Candles, and skyrockets filling our backyard and the night sky with colour and light. We usually cooked and ate marsh mellows around a huge bonfire, and sang choruses and hymns with our youth leader playing his piano accordion.

We presented an impressive drama called 'Quo Vadis' – the story of a Roman soldier converted through falling in love with a Christian. I had the lead role as Roman commander Marcus, with many pages to memorise, and Joy Newcombe as Lygia my love interest. We practiced our roles and rehearsed endlessly – often dissolving in laughter. Church ladies made costumes and we hired some. Why we presented that huge spectacle only once, after all that work, still amazes me. We could have gone on tour, at least to other churches, for we were very committed to its message. That was our version of the 1951 film by that name, which of course we did not get to see then, even with its Christian theme. Joy later served as a nursing missionary in Somalia, and I went to Papua New Guinea.

I taught Kindergarten children in Sunday School at 10am before the morning service at 11am. Then we attended morning service where we used the stately green-covered (metaphor for Christian growth) denominational hymn book. Many of the youth from outlying farms or boarding schools stayed over with friends in town or at our place and joined us for lunch. We had Sunday School teachers' training with mum in our lounge room and Christian Endeavour in the afternoon followed by dinner, usually with some of the youth at our place as well. Then came the 7.30pm gospel service using lively songs from the red-covered (metaphor for blood-red salvation) Sankey's hymn book. Sunday kept us busy; never a day of rest at our place!

Mum, like many ministers' wives then, was superintendent of the Kindergarten Sunday School and president of the Ladies Guild. Mum met with the young voluntary teachers on Sunday afternoons in our lounge room to prepare for the next Sunday. She used the cardboard models, drawn by one of her Sunday School teachers back in Arncliffe. Soon I joined them in making those models to use with my little class of 3 or 4 year olds. Then I was cutting out those square coloured cardboard baskets with a handle to give the kids with dough to make 5 buns and 2 fish to take home in their basket, to illustrate feeding the 5,000.

Mum tutored me so that I could play the piano for her in the Kindergarten Sunday School, even though she could do that far better than I ever would. I loved to play 'How great Thou art' which became my signature tune. When my sisters Elaine and Hazel sang the duet 'Whispering Hope' at a church function, I played for them and felt nervous, for I could spoil the whole thing if I fumbled.

Alas, with senior high school demands I gave up piano lessons, but occasionally would practice the harmonies of my favourite Burgmuller pianoforte pieces. Mostly I played hymns or choruses. Years later, I found that those hymns lasted the longest in my automatic motor memory.

I found Sundays full, and meaningful. My friends joined me in learning heaps about the Bible and Christian living. Dad preached his way through various books of the New Testament in the mornings, and focused on the first and second comings of Jesus at night. He involved us youth in the monthly evening youth service, so we were soon giving testimonies or mini-sermons. At 17, I led my first whole service including the preaching.

I still remember that sermon! Strangely enough it came from Leviticus, of all books. It grew out of my Scripture Union daily readings. It's the only time in my life, I think, when I preached from Leviticus, that book full of Israel's laws. But in my daily reading notes the

concepts had grabbed me, from Leviticus 22:

31 Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I am the LORD.

32 Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I am the LORD which hallow you,

33 That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD (KJV, naturally).

I switched the verse order around to come up with my alliterated, evangelical outline:

33 Salvation – delivered from bondage;

32 Sanctification – made holy;

31 Service – obeying God.

If I used that passage now I'd go for the original order, which in preaching language may be:

31 Service – obey God, rooted in and flowing out of

32 Sanctification – set apart and made holy by God, rooted in and flowing out of

33 Salvation – delivered by God.

That was my teenage world, like a Jewish boy in the synagogue! But I saw it from a New Testament perspective. Our parents encouraged us to study the Bible using daily Bible reading guides. I liked Scripture Union notes best. They covered key passages daily, with a brief commentary, short enough to hold interest and quick to read. Often I needed to be quick as my daily pattern involved reading my Bible passages before breakfast. For me it was not quite 'no Bible, no breakfast'. But it came close to that.

I began exploring different translations for more leisurely Bible study. Often they were birthday or Christmas gifts, which I valued more highly than the perennial socks or underwear. *Philips' New Testament* brought a breath of fresh air to familiar passages, especially the surprises like, 'To hell with you and your money' (Acts 8:20). I could not get away with that language at home – unless I was quoting the Bible! Now [www.BibleGateway.com](http://www.BibleGateway.com) provides an excellent tool for comparing translations.

My Bible study explored dozens of translations, and I added many of them to my growing library. I loved the *Good News Bible*, a dynamic translation enlivened with line drawings and handy section headings with cross-references. I first received it as a Christmas gift, the New Testament then titled, *Good News for Modern Man*. I read it through before the end of January. It made great holiday reading, so easy to understand, yet so sharp. I took it along to church services to compare it with the readings from the KJV. Now we use smartphones!

The Tamworth Baptist Tabernacle church building had tabernacle architecture, rectangular, tall, with columns at the front, based on the tabernacle and temple dimensions in the Old Testament. Inside, the large open baptistry perched high in the front wall behind and above the high-set pulpit with the communion table lower at the front. I remember one of my friends turning up for his baptism with his Speedo swimming costume. He'd never seen a baptism. So I loaned him my tennis whites. Nowadays we have baptised dozens of people in their swimmers in the ocean.

The pedal organ provided music for our hymns, played vigorously by a buxom lady who wore big hats. This teenager found her hats waving in time with her pumping the pedals quite fascinating. Women then all wore hats, as well as stockings and gloves. I think the stockings and gloves helped a lot in the cold winters. No respectable woman would wear make-up or jeans to our church in those days!

We men and boys had our traditions too, including suits with ties and polished leather shoes. My jobs at home included using Kiwi or Nugget black and tan shoe polish to shine

the family's shoes each Saturday on the back steps. Lined up all shiny, they looked like something from a caterpillar's wardrobe.

Mum, never really strong, faced an operation at the end of January 1955. So dad decided to build an aluminium caravan with a timber frame on a car trailer chassis. I helped him screw in a thousand screws to fasten the aluminium to his frame. Our holiday included a visit to Gloucester near the east coast where dad met with Harold Yates, the church secretary, to finalise details about moving there the next year. Dad had accepted an invitation to the church at Gloucester, beginning that February after mum's hysterectomy, in time for the new school year.

Dad drove us along the picturesque NSW coast, and we stopped often, joining hundreds of other families with caravans in crowded caravan parks, then moving on to another. If we liked a place we stayed longer there. These were wonderful days for us because we had our parents to ourselves for a change. Usually we shared our parents with everyone in the church, especially the young people. Now we enjoyed being together. Just us.

Mum made people feel wanted and loved, including us. Elaine wrote:

I think my best memory of mum is how she used to make me feel so special; I guess she did this with all her kids. We went on holidays one time and I was in the front seat with her and one of the babies lay across both of us, sleeping. I was aching from sitting still for such a long while, but she knew and said I had done such a wonderful job. One time she said I could do Daphne's hair better than she could (probably not true), but I think she was already very weak and having those iron injections Joy gave her. Oh I could go on, but I think that was the essence of her – making us all stand tall - probably the young people as well, and dad.

Then mum died. Unexpectedly. She died at the end of January, 1955, before she reached 40. Her heart failed with a post-operative haemorrhage. We were gob-smacked. None of us expected that.

The night she died, dad had gone to the Tamworth Base Hospital knowing that mum had survived the hysterectomy, and he was expecting to see her improving. At home I curled up in a lounge chair reading Campbell Morgan's *The Triumphs of Faith*, a series of sermons from Hebrews chapter 11, a Christmas present from my parents. That night I read about Enoch, who "walked with God; and he *was* not, for God took him" (Genesis 5:24; Hebrews 11:5-6).

Awesome timing! God's Spirit seemed to be speaking to me, comforting and explaining. Morgan referred to Longfellow's poetic lines that the body becomes "A worn-out fetter, that the soul had broken and flung away."

Morgan finished his sermon referring to a little girl who told her mother about the story of Enoch that she had heard in Sunday School, and how Enoch used to go for long walks with God. Her mother asked how it ended.

"Oh, Mother, one day they walked on and on, and got so far, God said to Enoch, 'You are a long way from home. You had better come in and stay with Me!'" she explained.

"God has been saying that to our loved ones again and again," Morgan concluded. "They have gone in to stay with Him, with Whom they had walked their earthly pilgrimage."

I read no more. I just knew that my mum had gone home. Later I realised I had not only read something from God's perspective, but I could tell my little sisters and brother that too.

It didn't wipe away the tears, but did take away the sting. Eventually.

Relatives and friends packed the church for the funeral, led by one of dad's friends. Grandpa turned up again, with uncle Frank. Dad sat with us, rare in that church because he was usually in the pulpit himself. We sang, "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath, And when my voice is lost in death, Praise shall employ my nobler powers; My days of praise shall ne'er be past, While life, and thought, and being last, Or immortality endures."

Those words test your faith or optimism when you're 17 and it's your mother's body in the coffin, leaving behind six children, the youngest barely one year old. Yet, I found strange comfort in knowing that my mother, who loved music so much, could now worship the Lord she loves, unfettered by weakness. The other hymn we sang, with tears streaming, had George Matheson's haunting yet comforting lyrics:

O Love that wilt not let me go ...

O light that followest all my way ...

O Joy that seekest me through pain ...

O Cross that liftest up my head ...

Then we stood around the fresh grave at the cemetery as her body was lowered, now marked by an attractively simple headstone declaring, *She lived for those she loved, and those she loved remember*. Indeed we do. For me, writing this on Mother's Day more than 50 years later, those warm, wonderful memories of her sacrificial loving service still inspire and challenge me.

So we left Tamworth, a bereaved and hugely diminished family, comforting one another and keeping the little children happy. Dad needed to leave Graeme and Heather with the Jarvis family, our friends on a farm in Griffith, while we relocated to Gloucester. That separation sharpened our sense of loss. So, for the first time ever, our depleted, motherless family had to live with those losses, both permanent and temporary.

I was comforted as I remembered Enoch, the man who walked with God right into heaven, knowing my mother was now part of that great eternal company (Genesis 5:21-27).

## **Gloucester, 1955-1959**

Doctor Foster went to Gloucester

In a shower of rain,

He stepped in a puddle,

Right up to his middle,

And never went there again.

We recited that nursery rhyme (originally about King Edward I's fall off his horse into a mud hole), on our long drive to Gloucester near the mid-north coast of NSW. The rhyme seemed appropriate because muddy floods along the Hunter River held us up for a week on the way, and we waded through our own emotional mud hole. We lived in our new caravan on that trip, another reminder of our recent loss, because our whole family had holidayed in it together a few weeks earlier.

Not only did I go to Gloucester, but I went there again and again while at Teachers College in Newcastle, 100 kilometres south. I rode the bus from 5.30am for two and a half hours each Monday morning to Newcastle, and returned home on Friday nights. For two years I returned home most weekends to help out with the family, and in the church, during 1955-1956.



Initially the family lived in a spare house on one of the church member's dairy farm, while dad arranged for the church to buy land in town where he could build yet another manse for his family. Like the manse at Griffith, it was a long hall-like building. We enjoyed fantastic views of the Gloucester Buckets, the mountain ridge I liked climbing that was opposite the town. Elaine became surrogate mother for the young children, and I helped out at weekends.

Harold Yates, the church secretary, seemed to be related to every member of the church in that close-knit community. His sister Eileen Maude was one of the leaders of the youth and very active in the church. We liked her, and valued her wisdom and grace. Her friendship with dad deepened into love, and they married early in 1956.

So I had left home, but I hadn't left home. I had my Newcastle world at college, and I boarded there with a single minister, Cliff Weston, at Charlestown. Then I had my family and church world at Gloucester, perhaps a useful mix of 'home and away'.

Although just 17, I helped dad in the church by starting a Sunday School and leading it as the first superintendent. We began with six children – four from our family and two from another. Gradually the Sunday School grew into two departments, Kindergarten and Seniors. I used my vast knowledge to train the teachers! Actually, I just used my teaching method notes, straight from college, and applied them to Sunday School. That's one reason I did well at method subjects at college.

Lesson plans became more comprehensive later on, but ours were versatile and creative, based on something as basic as:

Introduction – point of interest, link with prior learning, or attention grabbing.

Development – the main body of the lesson or story, and illustrations.

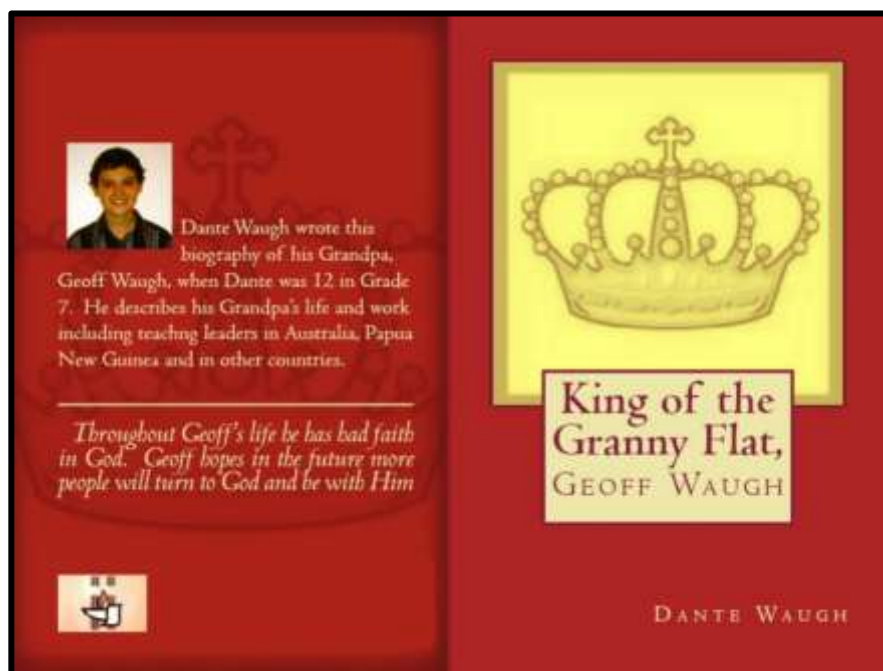
Conclusion – application to life, and response in faith.

I helped regularly with the Sunday School bus-run using my dad's Kombi van. It was fine so long as we had no mechanical problems. If we did, I had to find the nearest telephone, usually on a farm, and call for help. We organised Sunday School anniversaries each year and an annual picnic, where one of my jobs was to run around wearing a Hessian sack covered with peanuts or lollies tied to it while the children chased me to grab what they could. One trick was to circle round and then run near the slower kids.

Lynette and Dianne were born at Gloucester, bringing our family to eight, and we continued to grow together in our blended family. By then Elaine had begun nursing work, and I would soon be off teaching in Sydney.

Later on I returned to Gloucester again for two years in 1958-1959 to teach in the primary school. So I continued my involvement in the senior Sunday School, the youth group, and as a deacon. I had more opportunities to preach, and applied for 'the ministry', was accepted, and left from Gloucester to attend theological college.

Eventually, dad accepted a call to the Orange church, where Philip was born, completing our diverse family of nine children, all Christians, and eventually all married to Christians. Someone's prayers were being answered.



**King of the Granny Flat (in colour)**

**Biography of Geoff by his grandson Dante**

**in Primary School at age 12**

## Chapter 2

### Schools: green-board jungle



*School life, learning and teaching:* high school debating team, teachers college inter-collegiate debating, first school class of 43 teaching at 19 years

As student and teacher I explored the fascinating jungle of school life. The scenery changed like sailing along a long river. The blackboards with white chalk that we copied from at school gave way to green-boards with yellow chalk when I was teaching, both in Australia and PNG, and then progressed to white-boards with coloured markers, along with the appearance of electronic white boards and data-projectors when I was teaching at college. These modern aids, still used with exercise books, replaced the dust, slates, and parchments of ancient history back near the river's source, as in Jesus' day.

Jesus at twelve, in the temple, challenged me as a boy also. He knew his Bible, the Old Testament, and knew his God and Father. That example strongly influenced my own education.

Jesus learned primarily from the Torah, the books of Moses, and the rest of the Old Testament in local rabbinical schools. Not only did he learn to read and write, but like others he learned the Scriptures by memory, quoting them fluently. Fully immersed in his biblical culture he both lived by the law and the prophets and also fulfilled them in himself. He did not need to carry a Bible, or a bunch of scrolls. He knew his Bible.

Like other Jewish boys, Jesus learned much of the Scriptures in his own home, as I did in mine. At rabbinical school Jesus not only recited the Ten Commandments in the original Hebrew, but also great slabs of the law and the prophets, and their hymn book the Psalms. You probably know Psalm 23, 100, or 118. Jesus probably knew Psalms 1 to 150. He died quoting from Psalm 22:1, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" – "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46), and Psalm 31:6, "Into Your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

I sensed, but could not explain, that education must relate to God, not just as information about him but also knowing him personally, socially, and globally. I remember thinking that if you repeatedly asked "Why?" (as some children love to do) about anything, starting anywhere, you must eventually reach the first cause of everything, God himself.

My education at twelve and beyond, lacked some of the integrated grounding that Jesus had at that age, but my grounding influenced all my thinking. My education at school integrated with my education at home and church. That gave me foundations on which to build.

So with that orientation, I enjoyed school. Mostly I coasted along the varied and interesting stream of school life, making new discoveries with every bend in the river. I learned about the wild creatures out in life's jungle, including war-time enemies, but felt protected and adventurous. We had no known predators or drugs threatening us then.

At school in the war and post-war years we sang the first verse of our national anthem and saluted our flag on assembly at the start of every school day. We sang the whole three verses in music class and for special events such as Australia Day, Anzac Day and Empire Day. All the countries in red in my school atlas belonged to the British Empire. After Queen Victoria's death in 1901 (the year of Australia's federation), her birthday, 24 May, became Empire Day and in 1958 was renamed Commonwealth Day.

Our Australian national anthem then was the world's first national anthem sung in England from the 1780s. At school, amid the trauma and triumphs of post-war patriotism, I sang that prayer, "God save our gracious King."

The phrase, 'God save the king' predates the anthem, and comes from the KJV Bible of 1611. It was used for the kings of Israel, said in Hebrew, of course. I loved the anthem's tune and learned to play it on the piano in primary school days. I made up my own version, or adaptation, of the anthem, and sang it heartily as I played it. So my schoolboy's version for a new Australian national anthem predated the submissions of the 1972 polls by about twenty years!



God save Australia  
Long live Australia  
God save us all.  
Lord you're victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Lord you reign over us:  
God save us all.

Okay for a primary school kid! I believe the Lord is happy as well as victorious and glorious. 'He will rejoice over you with singing' (Zephaniah 3:17).

Since 1984, Australia's former national anthem became the royal anthem, and in our present anthem we rejoice in our youth and freedom. The two verses that became the official anthem begin:

'Australians all let us rejoice, For we are young and free' and  
'Beneath our radiant Southern Cross We'll toil with hearts and hands'.

I'm glad the Southern Cross gets a mention. Ancient mariners in the southern oceans determined due south from that beautiful five star constellation, which also adorns our flag and the New Zealand flag. To determine due south from that constellation, you project an imaginary line along the length of the cross and continue it below. Also project an imaginary perpendicular line that bisects the two bright pointer-stars to the left nearby. Where the two imaginary lines intersect is due south. I showed that to my children, and my children's children.

The Southern Cross (Crux) gets its name from the ancient form of public humiliation and torture to death, made eternally famous, and infamous, because Jesus died on a cross, the enduring symbol and only source of all true freedom, by which alone we can map our path into eternal life.

I explored some of that freedom in my friendly, fertile jungle of school life.

## **Infants School**

My formal schooling began in Arncliffe in Sydney, just one long block (for a 5 year old) from our home next to our church. I could walk to school safely. In Grade 1, I walked with my sister to her Kindergarten class at the school, and then joined my own class there. The infants school classes of Kindergarten to Grade 2 met in a separate two-storey brick building beside the bigger primary school.

We had war-time drills at school, lining up and filing into the bomb shelter in the playground. The bomb shelter looked like a long dirt hill from the outside. I found walking down underground into it quite an adventure, including sitting quietly in the dimly lit windowless interior. That was much better than standing still on parade. The only time I got the cuts on my fingers from the headmaster's cane was because I was talking in lines on parade – but that was a bit later. Among us boy us, it was a kind of tough guy badge!

Mum taught us in Scripture class for half an hour a week. Our teachers also read well-known Bible stories to us. The Education Department provided a colourful Bible storybook for teachers to read in class. I loved that book. We all had a copy so we could read from it as well. As a proudly Christian country, aware of our heritage, we prayed or said the Lord's Prayer together in class. I guess that was an option left up to the teacher, but apparently I scored teachers with those values.

A church-going 'Christian' was a mark of good breeding in those days. People generally

respected ministers, priests and doctors. Following the war, the returning chaplains held a place of honour in the community. They had suffered with the troops. They had been there at countless death-beds, hospitals and trenches, to comfort, care and bring hope amid the destruction. Ministers and priests led significant life rituals, such as at births, marriages and deaths. Later, at theological college, we referred to those events as being hatched, matched, and dispatched.

So being a minister's son, I shared in a little of that reverence for the role of the Reverend. My Sunday School and home background gave me a head start in the education process. I had already been reading many storybooks including Bible storybooks. I found it fairly easy to learn the three R's: reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic, but loved the fourth R for religion the best.

## **Primary School**

We lived in Griffith for most of my primary school days. There we could ride bikes everywhere on the wide, brown plains, including the two kilometres to school. At first we walked to school along the dirt road by the railway track, then past the radio station where dad would take his turn to record preaching or children's programs, then we crossed over the long main street with all the shops and their awnings over the footpaths, then over the wide irrigation canal and on to school. We had to protect ourselves from menacing magpies in hatching season. We used our school bags as protection, small brown suitcases held on our heads.

We learned to avoid those magpies while riding our bikes as well. No one had bike helmets then, so sometimes the unwary arrived at school with bloodied heads. We rode to school along with hundreds of others. Every school had long rows of bike racks with parallel bars into which you shoved your front wheel, and then ran off without needing a lock or chain. No one dreamt of stealing a bike. Besides, if we didn't show respect, we could get six of the best from the headmaster. We respected other people's property, and we did not need to lock our doors either.

Generally I liked school. Learning was fun. So I found it easy to coast along. We had little or no homework, especially as many of the country kids were busy with farm chores after school as well as before school in the mornings.

I played with many of my church friends at school too. I saved stamps, especially Australian ones, and swapped stamps with friends. Dennis Bowen, a friend from church, played marbles well. I loaned my coloured cat's eye marbles to him and he always won more for my growing collection. A drunken driver killed him while Dennis was riding his pushbike when we were in high school. That was my first experience of a friend dying. It disturbed me, especially as I inherited his good brown suit, my first long pants, worn after we left Griffith. Most of our clothing was second hand then.

I enjoyed talking to another school friend Marvin, the son of a Seventh Day Adventist minister, always polite and neatly dressed. Half a century later I spoke on revival at an SDA village church in Vanuatu, where God's Spirit led the village congregations into sincere reconciliation.

Max Cole, another good friend, owned a tandem pushbike, and we rode together on it all over the place, often taking sandwiches somewhere into the bush. Max became an engineer. We met again half a century later, discovering we had both experienced the renewing power of the Holy Spirit in our life journeys.

## High School

I started high school at Griffith and liked the greater choice in subjects. I wanted to study Greek, but it was not available. So I embarked on French. Voila!

I also sang in a first year high school boys soprano group there, before my voice broke. It included the harmonies of 'Speed Bonny Boat' sung to a packed auditorium for speech night when pupils received awards for outstanding achievement in scholarship or sport, and parents and friends filled the hall. Max sang in that group too. Max went on to be captain of the high school there. I went off to Tamworth in my second year at high school.

Changing schools is a real pain. Subject choices did not match, and even in a class with the same name, such as French, the teacher had a different way of teaching and had covered different ground. Now I had to work hard to try and catch up. We had to start all over again with friendships, although the church youth group provided a new set of friends quickly.

I liked history and geography. Unfortunately then, unlike now, Religious Education was not a board subject, and it never bored me. We studied it as a weekly denominational class, taken by my dad. I really enjoyed studying the Christian Education materials produced by our denomination.

One year, we explored the book of Acts in Scripture class. It fascinated me. Still does. I kept my project book from that study for decades, and later used its activities in my own teaching. I suspected that the church was supposed to be just like the book of Acts still, and sometimes wondered why it was not.

Drama and debating at high school appealed to me and I participated in inter-school competitions in both. Each year, every grade would perform a drama from a text book, so I even had a go at Shakespeare. We studied *Twelfth Night*, and I landed the role of Malvolio! I managed to be highly recommended for my lead role in a more lively school play, 'The Highwayman' acting and revelling in the part of a mischievous, outrageous Robin-hood style robber, a breath of fresh air for this conservative teenager.

I found debating even more fun, especially as the third speaker or whip. That allowed plenty of creativity in demolishing opponents' arguments. One debate we won easily in our inter-school contests was when we agreed with our opponents' arguments, and used their own arguments against them to prove that they did not go nearly far enough in their position. Later on I began to suspect that about church life! We preached New Testament life, but did not go far enough in living it.

The weekly lunchtime meetings of the Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF) appealed to me. I was its president in my final year and led the committee in helping our teacher-supervisor organise the program and invite various speakers. ISCF helped broaden my understanding of how God works among all his people, and I found we had so much in common that our doctrinal differences seemed small and petty.

Many of my friends from youth group also participated actively in ISCF. Having friends involved there, as well as in our denominational Scripture classes, made it easy for me to integrate church and school life, and be involved in leadership in both.

I gained a government teachers college scholarship and applied to attend the college in Newcastle, the nearest to our new home in Gloucester.

## Teachers College

Teachers College was liberating, especially the teaching method classes, the ‘practice teaching’ supervised by a class teacher, the debating and the interdenominational Christian Fellowship. My ultimate goals included ‘ministry’ and ‘mission’ so I was happy to train for primary school teaching as further preparation. My own family also gave me with plenty of experience with young children.

During the week in Newcastle I boarded in a manse at Charlestown, a half hour bus trip from college, with Cliff Weston, a young minister just out of college. That gave me even more exposure to life from another minister’s perspective.

After a few weeks settling into Newcastle, I returned each weekend to Gloucester by bus to help with the family and in the church. I applied my new insights and skills from college in Sunday School teaching at home in Gloucester. So I started the Sunday School in the weatherboard church building with six children, four of them being my own sisters and brother.

I enjoyed it, so I expect that they did too. Now I added my new perspectives from college, including writing lesson plans. As the Sunday School grew we needed to add staff, so then I was doing what my mum had done, training them on Sunday afternoons.

Eileen Maude, became our second mum after her friendship with dad ripened into romance. We enjoyed her company, and she bravely tackled the mammoth task of marrying into a family of six children.

At the beginning of my second year at college I needed to stay and help look after the other children until dad and our new mum returned from their honeymoon. Then once again I took the bus to college, arriving a few days late. The Vice Principal chided me for my lateness.

“I had to stay at home with the family while my dad went on his honeymoon,” I explained. With raised eyebrows, he accepted that reason without further comment.

My sister Dianne, born at Gloucester, remembers, “When you first came to Gloucester, church was new. Dad started a Sunday School and you were superintendent at 17. Teachers all came to the manse for a baked dinner and meeting. Mum was amazed that there was always enough food to go around. They stayed the afternoon and you took them through teacher training and told them how to present next week’s lesson. Most lived out of town so stayed for tea then went to evening service and then their parents took them home.”

I faced new, unexpected challenges at college. One English assignment required us to critique a movie! Fortunately I recalled seeing Cecil B de Mille’s early black and white version of the Ten Commandments in a church hall. Then our lecturer took us to see Laurence Olivier in a Shakespeare film, then showing at the cinema. After overcoming my reservations about that ‘place of sin’, I found the vivid, classic presentation of Shakespeare riveting! Some of those visual images remain with me still – a reminder of their power, for good or ill.

Teachers college introduced me to an astounding variety of teaching activities in a wide range of subjects, many of which I would soon be teaching myself in schools. I was learning to make learning fun, and creative. We learn far more if we enjoy what we do. I found you can even do that with maths games, or fun poems, or history’s adventures.

In Physical Education we not only participated in a huge range of games and activities for our own development, but also to teach children. We earned our bronze medallion in life saving at the nearby ocean baths. That seemed like getting a medal for having fun in the pool on the summer days at the end of the college year.

Each week we walked to the nearby demonstration school, where excellent teachers

demonstrated how to teach in the classroom. So the kids in that area had the extra benefit of really good teachers. We sat at the back of the classroom and observed. There I saw teachers interacting with their pupils and lighting them up. It's called motivation. It was motivating me too.

I enjoyed 'prac teaching' especially as the teachers I worked with in 'practice teaching' seemed glad to hand over lessons to me and have a break to do their marking or preparation. Of course they had to supervise me, but after the first day when they discovered the class did not erupt into wild jungle chaos with me, they left me to it.

"You can handle the class on your own," they observed. "It's good experience for you!"

So I did. Of course, the class knew that if they got out of line I could call their teacher in at anytime, so that made it easy to manage them.

College lecturers inspected us, and wrote reports about us, which I appreciated as they usually affirmed me, with suggestions for improvements. "You prepare well, handle the class well, and interact well with individuals, so there is no need to preach. They'll make up their own minds," a lecturer observed. So I had some things to unlearn too!

We did get into some preaching at college through the Christian Fellowship (CF). I enjoyed it and took to it like a duck to water. CF, in fact, helped me understand different approaches to Christian living. Students at college usually led CF meetings and often spoke. We focused on the gospel and Christian discipleship and avoided divisive issues such as baptism, confirmation and clerical dress. In my second and final year when I was president of the CF, I worked with a lively, capable committee in arranging meetings and social programs.

I joined the college debating teams and represented our college with two other debaters in our inter-collegiate visit to Wagga Wagga in our second year, along with the sporting and drama club teams. We lost our debate there, thanks to a brilliant whip on the opposing side who also happened to be the president of their CF. I didn't mind losing to him! In fact I was so impressed with his persuasive speaking that I was thinking, "There's a born evangelist. I'd love to hear him preach."

All too soon those comfortable student years passed. So at 19, idealistic and keen, I began school teaching.

## **Teaching in Sydney**

Appointed to Panania in eastern Sydney, I taught a large class of 43 boys, around eight years old. That involved a lot of marking with maths each day and regular compositions to correct!

My dad's sister Isobel and her husband Les Foote lived at Bexley North on the same train line as the school. They kindly boarded me in their spare room for the year of 1957. That year we gazed in awe at the world's first satellite, the Russian's Sputnik, gliding through the night sky like a tiny star. That's the year I got launched into my vocational orbit also.

I taught Grade 3A, the boys' first year in primary school. Their Infants School teachers had taught them well, which made me look good at inspections because I built on their thorough grounding in the basics. My principal had to send in regular reports on his probationary teacher, and we also had a full school inspection that year with an outside inspector, who just happened to be my former history teacher in senior classes at Tamworth High School. The education department issued our teachers certificate on our completion of three years of satisfactory probationary teaching.

My class was a good bunch, and I really enjoyed teaching them. Many of them, especially the new Australians, immigrants' children, worked hard, often to my surprise. I could give them some homework and find it done well by most of the class.

Many of the pupils were bright and creative. We had a piano on the low stage at the back of the classroom, so not only could I show off my limited piano skills in music lessons, but I could use theirs also. A few of them were learning piano, and could usually play treble clef tunes for us.

Early in that first year of teaching I had a surprising, accidental windfall. We used large foolscap books produced by the Department of Education with double pages for planning each subject we taught. All the staff gave these to the principal for his approval. It contained our lesson plans for all subjects for the next five weeks. My boss inadvertently left a bundle of these on my desk one day, collected from the rest of the staff. I thought he left them for me to see, and learn from, so I took them home overnight and studied them! In fact, as I discovered the next day, he had just forgotten them.

A brilliant one, better than all the rest, impressed me. That teacher drew a large map with all his subjects linked directly to his history and geography theme. It was like those maps where information is summarised in rectangles, with lines drawn to the relevant location. Then on each subject's double page he showed the specific details of how that subject both related to and also extended the overall theme. It showed superb integration.

I adapted it for my class. We were studying early Australian history, including aboriginal life and early explorers. I found I could co-ordinate all my subjects around that, each reinforcing the other subjects, even Maths. Sadly, aboriginal numbers decreased as settlers numbers increased. English lessons easily related to the theme, including compositions and Australian poetry. Art and craft could brightly illustrate our theme on displays around the room. We sang songs about our theme.

My aboriginal mission contacts, found through mission prayer magazines, provided us with plenty of current and historical information as well. One mission group sold small artefacts including boomerangs, nulla-nullas (clubs), spears and shields. So we not only had them on display, but many of the boys wanted to buy some as well. Mission life was informing and enriching my teaching life.

Before the days when school excursions became common, I asked my boss if I could organise a class excursion to historical sites in Sydney cove. He felt that I was biting off more than I could chew, so did not give me permission for that. So I asked him if he had any objections to me taking the pupils in groups of about 10 at a time into the city on Saturdays over a few weeks, for those interested, on my own time. He did not object to that, so long as I received written parental consent. So we did it, and I had fun relating to them outside of the classroom.

Each Saturday for a month I took a group of boys by train into the city, and we explored Sydney Cove, the Tank Stream sites (buried under the streets), monuments to Captain Cook and Governor Philip, and models of the Sirius and Supply ships from the First Fleet in a museum. It not only lifted the morale and friendships in the class, but added lively discussions to our lessons.

The education department provided Scripture books of Bible stories, and teachers had the option of teaching from them for half an hour a week. So I did. Then I discovered that if I started each day with half an hour like that, including reading from novels or lively history books, or singing, the class seemed more settled and ready for the challenges of maths and

spelling and creative writing. We normally used the afternoons for more relaxed lessons including music, poetry, art and craft, and physical education.

During summer months all the teachers took their class by bus to a council swimming pool for the class to have an hour's lesson with a physical education teacher. We all enjoyed that outing. A few years later I had fun teaching swimming in summer vacation schools run by the education department. Those vacation jobs helped me pay for my theological college courses.

At one of my first vacation swimming schools I stumbled onto a great idea, perhaps divinely guided. I duplicated a list of about 30 skills that the pupils could tick off as they achieved them. They began with simple tasks such as: *I can blow bubbles. I can hold my head under the water. I can kick my legs while hanging onto the side of the pool.* Then they graduated to harder skills near the end of the list, such as: *I can swim across the shallow end. I can swim across the deep end. I can swim the length of the pool.*

The list worked well. It proved highly motivational. Some pupils even brought their list with their parents to the pool between sessions so that they could tick off more achievements, so I found I had also given the parents something to use with their children. They learned fast, most being able to swim in two days. My supervisor liked the idea and took it to the education department. They produced a more specialised printed card with about 10 achievement steps on it, used across the state. Later on, I preferred to use my longer version along with theirs, as even the slowest learners could then tick off something each day from my long version.

The Ten Commandments movie, with Charlton Heston as Moses, came to theatres that year. So I went to see it, breaking the taboos of my upbringing. I found it so overwhelming that I immediately bought another ticket and saw it again in the next session! Knowing the story well, I could distinguish between fact and fiction. As with all movie interpretations, it gave me fresh insights to consider. Now I have it, and other versions, in my DVD collection, as well as about 20 DVD versions of the life of Christ! I've used many such DVDs or videos in recent short-term mission trips.

Church life still gave me further opportunities to teach. I attended nearby Kingsgrove Baptist Church with my Aunt and Uncle, and soon found myself teaching the Sunday morning high school aged group in Sunday School. What a contrast to eight year olds! Those teenagers liked to explore tough questions of the Bible and science, or the Bible and history. I was still a teenager myself, but fortunately I had quite a few bright young people in the class who could prepare and contribute creatively and convincingly.

Some denominational leaders, including the Director of the Young People's Department (YPD), knew me from their visits to our churches and home. So that year I began leading children's camps, not knowing then that I would later lead thousands of children and youth that way in my Christian Education work later on. Fortunately the church YPD supplied all needed resources, including project books, so it was easy to plan the program and guide the team of keen youth leaders who all had a small group to care for and disciple for a week together. Many hundreds of children and youth made commitments to Christ in those camps over the years.

## Teaching in Gloucester

Dad suggested I apply for a transfer to Gloucester school so that I could return home and help with his growing family and the growing church. So I did, reluctantly, as I was enjoying spreading my wings. However, I also appreciated being at home again.

So for the next two years I taught a combined third and fourth grade class at Gloucester, stretching my skills a bit further. Now I was not only integrating lessons around one theme, but often two. Now I was combining some subjects for both grades, but also working with two grade levels in Maths and English, and with wider skill levels in some subjects.

Dad owned a Kombi van in those days. I had the use of it at weekends for some extra-curricular activities. I would take class groups on Saturday excursions related to our studies, as well as enjoying time together. So again, as in Sydney, class became enriched by some touches of community life shared together. That included tennis. Many students played competition tennis, and I played with interested students, usually after school. I remember one grateful dad telling me he had been trying to get his sons to play competition tennis for some years, but they wouldn't, until they started playing with me. I think those boys enjoyed beating me, and then they became interested in more challenging games.

One December I organised a group of school pupils to attend a camp at the church camp property called Elim, at Forster on the coast. Dad had, once again, supervised building the camp huts and done most of the work with volunteer teams. My young sister Dianne had this memory:

“When you were teaching school at Gloucester you had a lot of welfare kids in your classes so the week before Christmas you took them to Elim. The parents didn't have much money so only had to pay for one kid from each family. You bought food with your money and mum's housekeeping money. They ate like locusts and by the end of the week no one in our family had any money left. Mum said the kids in our family had a meagre Christmas after the camp.

“Dad came over after the service at Gloucester on Christmas morning when there was not much food at camp. Mum was there with younger kids from our family, and the camp kids had gone home by then. God had supplied some vegetables and apricots that someone gave Dad, so the family dined sumptuously for Christmas dinner.”

My school principal liked to maximise the teaching skills of his staff, and encouraged some teachers to specialise in a subject, as well as teach their own class. He knew that I loved teaching the half hour of Scripture, so that became my speciality. I taught Scripture, using the education department's Scripture book, across most grades, and swapped with the class teacher who would take my class for their speciality. It was also a smart way for that Christian principal to get the optional half hour of Scripture taught in some other classes. I appreciated other teachers taking my class as well. So there I was at school teaching Bible and Christian stories to many grades. Having a Christian 'specialist' has become more common recently with the appointment of school chaplains, but for the fifties it was surprisingly innovative.

Once again, I tackled a range of church roles including leading the senior section of the growing Sunday School, helping to train the Sunday School teachers in our home on Sunday afternoons (where our new mum was constantly amazed that everyone had ample food to eat for lunch, and many for dinner as well), leading Junior Christian Endeavour, doing some preaching, and becoming a junior deacon. We had a lot of fun with the youth group, with Saturday and Sunday activities, and with Sunday School picnics. Heather recalls, “I remember chasing you, the Peanut Man, at Sunday School picnics.”



At that time dad gave me a reconditioned Remington portable typewriter, housed in a nicely covered wooden case. So I took typing lessons, and pounded away on that sturdy machine for hours. I recommend it to anyone – not the old, reconditioned machine (reliable as it was) but the skill of typing. I still use that skill, as in typing this book.

The denominational leaders asked Dad to lead a team in Papua New Guinea to build the first Baptist Church building in Port Moresby, at Boroko. He was away for six weeks, and I helped our new mum run the home and also helped with the church, such as preaching occasionally. Heather, then in primary school, remembers:

When dad was in New Guinea building the church and you took on ‘head of the family’ you used to tell Graeme, Daphne and myself a story after dinner if we got our dinner eaten in the time given. All three of us had to finish everything on our plate and then we got to hear the story - a new version made up on the spot every night. It was called Biggles, Higgles and Giggles! I cannot remember the story now and just remember some of the nights being very scary, especially one night when the light was turned off and we heard a chapter in the dark with a loud bang at the end!

Those spontaneous stories grew out of ideas generated from my boyhood reading of the adventures of Biggles, the war time flying ace.

Dianne remembered another event: “While dad was in PNG you were asked to preach at Stroud so you took our Kombi van. During the afternoon you went for drive on Silo hill and mum is not sure what you did but somehow the wheels went over the road embankment and you couldn’t get them back up. Mum thinks a farmer had to go and pull you out.”

A farmer did pull me out! I took the opportunity to go sight-seeing between the morning and evening services, after lunch at a church member’s home. The side of the road was wet after rain, and I was enjoying the view, but I bogged the Kombi. I had to get the nearest farmer to pull me out with his tractor. I hope I was smart enough to weave that into the night sermon as an illustration (help one another, or keep your eyes on the goal), for in that farming district everyone freely shared such amusing details – the down-to-earth farmer rescues the head-in-the-clouds preacher.

At home, school, Sunday School, and preaching I used interesting ways to teach or entertain. For example, I found this smart mnemonic in the *Reader’s Digest*. Link numbers to a picture to help you remember: 1 bun, 2 shoe, 3 tree, 4 door, 5 hive, 6 sticks, 7 heaven, 8 gate, 9 vine, 10 hen. Then link those mental pictures with anything you want to remember easily. Here are two simple examples I often used.

Remembering the Ten Commandments:

- 1 – bun shaped like a god face – no other gods before Me
- 2 – shoe hanging on idol’s feet – no graven images; no idols
- 3 – tree crashes on axeman’s foot who swears – no swearing
- 4 – door of church with peak – remember Sabbath to keep it holy
- 5 – hive with busy bee family – honour your parents
- 6 – sticks used to club someone to death – no murder
- 7 – heaven, all one and pure in God’s family – no adultery
- 8 – gate, thieves creep through to steal – no stealing
- 9 – vine grower exaggerates number of grapes – no lying
- 10 – hen, not yours, wanted for dinner – no coveting

That’s from the Old Testament. The next one is from the New Testament.

Remembering the 'I am' claims of Jesus:

- 1 – bun - the bread of life
- 2 – shoe - the way, the truth, the life – walking that way
- 3 – tree - the good shepherd, resting in shade
- 4 – door - the door
- 5 – hive - the resurrection and the life – if you sit on it!
- 6 – sticks - the light of the world – a stick alight, Olympic torch
- 7 – heaven - alpha and omega, the beginning and the end – eternal
- 8 – gate - the first and the last – going through narrow gate
- 9 – vine - the true vine
- 10 – hen - before Abraham was, I am – chicken or egg first?

One trap! Don't muddle your mental pictures! Learn one list first, to get the pictures and links straight. Then at another time, add another list. Now, some of you readers will try to master both lists straight away, to see if you can do it! If you've done that, you can test yourself by saying the fifth commandment or the fifth 'I am' without looking at the list!

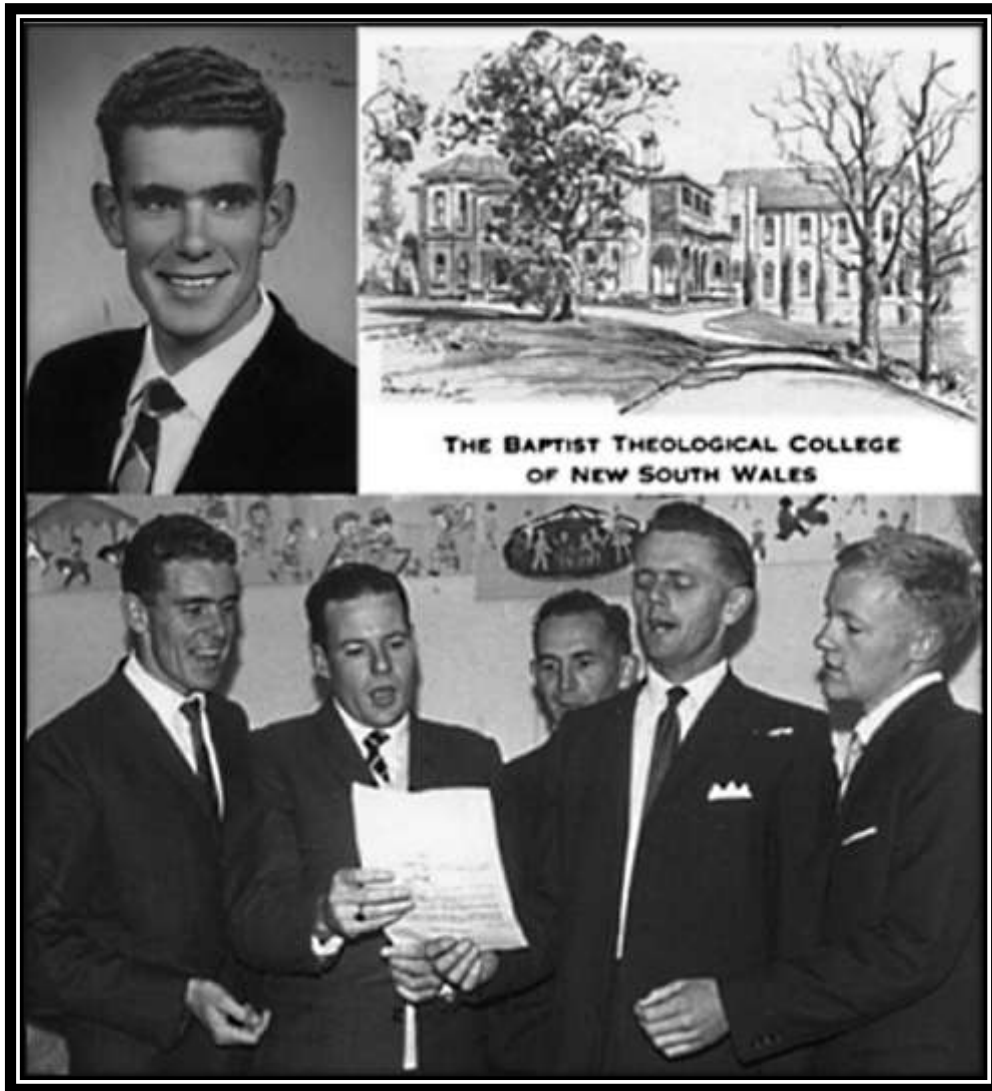
Those teaching activities helped to prepare me for entry into theological college and for a lifetime serving God in teaching and preaching.



[\*Great Commission Mission\*](#)

## Chapter 3

### Ministry: to lead is to serve



*Theological College, learning and serving:* Geoff at the Baptist Theological College in Sydney, Ashfield campus, college singing group

Sir Peter Kenilorea, the first prime minister in the Solomon Islands, a strong Christian, contributed this motto to his nation's crest: *To lead is to serve*. He captured something of Jesus' radical example.

Ministry is a tricky word! Its root meaning is to serve, to minister to others. Its narrow, specialist use as applied to 'Christian ministry' is a vocation, especially as a pastor. However, I was a minister as a full-time pastor for only one year of my life. I have been an ordained minister since 1964. But I have been involved in ministry most of my life. So I'm using the term here in its narrow sense of vocation, but keeping it grounded in its wider and truer sense of service. We all minister. We all serve.

A fascinating paradox deepened for me in ministry. Take leadership. Can there be a greater leader than Jesus? Yet his example and requirements turn everything inside out and upside down. He lived and revealed the kingdom of God in all he did. He led with servant leadership – a paradox, even an oxymoron. Often *leader* and *servant* seem to be opposites.

The more I got to know the Bible, the more startling, it was. Take Jesus' disciples, for example. They were so much like us, missing the point constantly.

Jesus told them to be humble and to serve, and every day he demonstrated how to do it. Yet, they often debated about who was the greatest. They argued about that as they trekked with Jesus (Mark 9:35-37). They did it again at the last supper (Luke 22:24). So Jesus had to punch home his lesson, lay aside his garments, grab a bowl and towel and wash their dusty feet, dressed as the lowliest slave (Luke 22:23-27; John 13:12-17).

Jesus demonstrated faith, and looked for faith in his followers. However, he rebuked his followers constantly for their lack of faith. What about us? I think the same applies.

Or take Jesus' brothers, James, Joseph (Joses), Simon and Jude. They grew up with him, but they did not believe in him (John 7:5). They changed, as we can. The risen Jesus appeared to his brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7) who later became the leader of the church in Jerusalem and author of the practical letter of James. Similarly with Jude and the extremely practical letter from that other brother of Jesus.

So my quest for biblical ministry kept challenging and changing me as well.

## **Apprenticeship**

Being a Preacher's Kid (PK) gave me a long apprenticeship in vocational ministry. Many PK's rebel against that, especially if they have no interest in or calling to full-time pastoral ministry. The expectations of church people, as well as parents, may chafe. But I found it okay, mostly. I tend to see the glass half full, not half empty. Maybe that's a gift of faith!

Home and church life gave me wonderful access to learning about and living in God's kingdom in the paradox of its *now* and *not yet* dimensions. God's kingdom is here now, fulfilled in Jesus, but not yet here in its fullness.

My own ministry calling and basic optimism helped me live in faith, seeking more of the kingdom. That helped me overcome my inherited reserve and saw me through various obstacles. God can turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

Someone complained because our family bought a refrigerator to replace our old ice chest with the large blocks of ice delivered to the door! I remember being annoyed to find my sensitive mother in tears because someone in the church had criticised her in some way, like getting that fridge before the church member had one.

My parents, of course, provided strong and clear examples of ministry and serving. As I

grew I became more aware of the myriad ways in which my parents served and helped people. My Sunday School teachers and youth group leaders impacted my life, and I have good memories of them. We also had a passing parade of visitors staying at our home, usually for a weekend at a time. That provided a seamless interaction of home, church, and community.

We keenly followed the reports of our own 'real live missionaries' in India, Borneo or Africa. They included Dulcie, Evelyn and Joy who had all been part of our church youth groups, and part of our extended family as well. We had charts with maps and photos of their regions and work. That impacted me strongly.

So my boyhood goal of becoming a minister and missionary was no sudden Damascus Road conversion. I already lived in that world which I enjoyed and valued. Teaching, including Teachers College, although 'secular' became 'sacred' for me – a normal progression.

We all teach. Our example and abilities influence and teach others. Parents teach children. A huge army of volunteers in churches and the community teach children and youth and peers in a vast array of groups as well as personally. You do too.

## **Theological College**

Dad studied at the NSW Baptist Theological College when I was young. Now it was my turn. When I started, aged 22, my Uncle Frank was two years ahead of me there, in the four-year course. He too had been strongly influenced by my parents' example. Frank still played tricks on me, even there. If I was out too late at night with my girlfriend I might return to find all my room furniture neatly arranged accurately on the front lawn and my room completely empty of its meagre contents: bed, wardrobe, bookshelf, table and chair.

My sister Elaine met John Olley at Kingsgrove Baptist, as I had, and she married him. John also applied for 'the ministry' and went through the college two years after me. He had completed his Ph.D. studies in science. So we all basked in his reflected glory.

My theological college life wove in with my family life as well. At college I had an uncle there for half my course, and for the other half I had a brother-in-law. Frank lived in the student accommodation, then at Ashfield in Sydney, as I did. John and Elaine, being married, lived in the manse of their student pastorates.

Further to that saga, my young brother Philip also attended the same theological college. However, he enrolled much later. My other brother, Graeme, inherited a different set of genes from my dad and became a capable builder, and he also moved into teaching, at technical college.

I was a country lad who did not automatically adapt to city life. It seemed so crowded, busy, and unrelentingly noisy. I would climb onto the roof of the old two storey mansion at Ashfield in Sydney just to look out over the horizon, and rise above the claustrophobia. But even there, the undulating hills had turned from varied forest greens to varied red tiles as far as the eye could see. Hardly inspiring!

I completed my first two years of study in the grand old mansion at Ashfield, and then the denomination relocated the college to new buildings on the five-hectare property at Macquarie Park, now adjacent to Macquarie University where I completed two more years. The college later became Morling College in honour of the principal I had at Ashfield, Principal Morling.

Principal Morling set a wonderful tone for the college. We single students living there ate our evening meal with him at the long dining table. The senior students like Frank sat closer to him for animated discussions, and the junior students like me at the far end of the table

listened in awe. Fortunately Principal Morling liked a joke, especially his own, so we always had laughter at the table. We ate in proper English style, with suits or our gold trimmed, black college blazers, ties and polished shoes. Starched napkins adorned our laps, and no one sat or started until the principal did.

I enjoyed college lectures, mostly. At least it was a change from me doing the teaching. Principal Morling captivated me most, with his rich devotional approach to theology. With him it could never be merely academic theologising. Always we were encountering our awesome God, not just learning theories about the divine nature. Our principal spoke from a deep, personal relationship with God, and we caught some of that devotion.

We studied Greek for four years, never my favourite as I am no linguist. However, I did love capturing some of the great Greek concepts such as *agape*, *koinonia*, and *ecclesia*, exploring the riches of love, fellowship, and church. By the end of our first year we could translate slabs of 1 John from Greek into English. The passage was familiar and I easily learned the KJV from memory. I still appreciate using my Inter-linear Greek and English New Testament, and used it to check some references in this book.

We studied the usual theological college subjects, such as exegesis of major books of the Bible (Isaiah, not Leviticus; John, not James). We studied Church History, and I grew more convinced that the political and institutional church was not really the church, and often persecuted the real church, as Luther discovered. We studied Pastoral Care, and I floundered with the new concepts of active listening and non-directive counselling, in which preachers are not generally experts. We studied preaching (homiletics) and I loved that, carrying off the preaching prize in my final year. That was like a home run, after all those years of apprenticeship.

College life had its social dimensions as well. The two elected senior students took turns a week about to wake us at 6am for personal devotions. In my final year I supported Tony Cupit in those roles, and remember finding most students in bed most mornings except our mission students from overseas such as Joshua Damoi from PNG and Sulen Bosemitari from India. They were already dressed and on their knees every morning. I glimpsed why revival may happen more often overseas than with us. They pray more, and may obey more.

We had inter-collegiate sports competitions with the other theological colleges in Sydney, and I found my niche in athletics, usually winning middle distance races, high jumping and long jumping. The competition was not up to senior high school standard!

Not so with soccer. The college team roped me into playing on the wing, because I could run fast and often get to the ball first. I had never played soccer like many of them had, so my best bet was to get rid of the ball as soon as possible and pass it quickly to the centres where mates like Tony could handle the ball well and score often. Team work is a key ministry skill!

We debated. So I was part of the inter-college debating team for four years. This was familiar territory. We reached the finals of the debating competition many times, but didn't bring home the trophy. However, we did appreciate the experience and did grow through it.

So I enjoyed college, but I think I coasted, rather than applying myself to a serious academic career. That came later. A girl friend, and church life, were more interesting.

Single students, like Frank and myself, had preaching appointments in our first year and then were also student pastors for three years. So I became the student pastor for two years at North Epping and then for a year at Narabeen, both suburban churches in Sydney.

Word got around that I'd been a teacher, so I had more children's camps to lead, and spoke at various Sunday School anniversaries. I also preached at a church north of Sydney for a few

months in my first year as their interim preacher. All that appealed to me much more than memorising Greek.

I recall a few impressive moments. On one of those Sunday trips I went with another student in his car. He was a fairly new convert, not skilled in the 'thees' and 'thous' which thou shalt say in prayer. He suggested we pray as we drove, so of course I bowed my head, closed my eyes, and prayed in ancient English. Then to my horror I heard him praying in normal English while driving. I looked up, startled. He was merrily praying away as he drove, eyes wide open, using irreverent language like, "God you're great, and we ask you to do great things in church today." Traditional Geoff was learning from a recently converted mate!

At a Sunday School anniversary talk in one church I inadvertently filled the church with smoke from Elijah's burning altar on the communion table. Deacons rushed to open the windows as the congregation coughed and spluttered. I never did get invited back to that church.

## **North Epping, Sydney**

I had my first experience of being a student pastor, and also the founding pastor of a new church at North Epping during my second and third years in college, 1961-1962. The innovative, adventurous people there pioneered a new church plant from Epping.

We had a brand new building which later became the church hall. Each Sunday the leaders arranged the chairs for Sunday School classes, and then for the service. Some of my friends from that church kept in touch with me over the years since, praying for our mission work. We had about 100 keen people, full of vision for their new church, so I rode on that wave of enthusiasm.

There I led the two services on Sunday, following our traditions with the four-hymn sandwich, the KJV Bible, and ancient English in my prayers. I knew the traditions, and enjoyed them. Although I no longer use those traditions, God's Spirit graciously moved among us then, and now also.

Preaching twice on Sundays challenged me, and in retrospect I wonder why I did not use their local preachers much more fully. The congregation had many professional people including the treasurer of the Baptist Union and a high school principal. That challenged me, and occasionally they gave me feedback such as a need for more careful preparation.

I led the Wednesday night Bible Study at the church with a much smaller group. They were the older ones, and faithful prayers – the real core of the church. Thankfully, I did not have to chair the church business meetings. They were already experts at that, and had brought that church into being through their meetings. Occasionally I visited people in their home, but that was not expected of 'busy' college students. I rode my 125 cc motor bike all over the city, and revelling in the freedom and adventure. Those were two good years, and I was more interested in that pioneering church life than getting all my essays in on time. A valid interest, but not a valid excuse!

## **Narrabeen, Sydney**

During my fourth and final year at college I was the student pastor of the new little church at Narrabeen on the north shore of Sydney. They too were building a beautiful new building, but that was not opened till the middle of the year. So for the first half of my time there we met in

a school hall and had to bring in all our equipment and put out the chairs every Sunday morning and pack up everything afterwards. Fortunately, perhaps, we had no night service there until we moved into the new church building.

Again, I found a keen bunch of pioneers, looking forward to establishing the church in their area. When I have met some of them since then, they remember the way I often had to dodge school decorations, such as pupils' paintings strung across the room like clothes on a line. I was grateful to be working with another fresh young congregation, and we had many young families in that church, so usually had plenty of noise as well.

That was also the toughest year of my life until then, apart from my mother's death. Many people in that church prayed with me, and others, about vital decisions I had to make. Those decisions were deeply personal. I had fallen in love. I met a fine, committed, gracious Christian, when I was teaching at Gloucester. Our friendship had ripened over the years into love and an engagement. I had my eyes firmly set on mission work, and we shared many of my student pastorate experiences together. So we applied for mission service with the Baptist mission in PNG. The mission committee rejected our application, throwing us into a tailspin. Had we settled for ministry in NSW, we could have gone ahead with the denomination's blessing. But I felt strongly led to mission. We worked though some painful counselling that year, including helpful assessment with a Christian psychiatrist, who was also a PK, deeply empathetic and insightfully helpful.

We chose to part, an enormously difficult choice. I did reapply for PNG, and went. We chose to leave the outcome in God's hands. It was beyond us. I still believe that God works in all things for good. We had to trust him for that too. Since then, of course, we have both been blessed with even more fulfilling relationships in marriage and in our families.

Then, for a year after college I had a year in the country as a full-time pastor before leaving for PNG.

## **Ariah Park, NSW**

Where's Ariah Park? That was my immediate question when appointed there in 1964, my first year out of college. That was the only year in my life when I have been a full-time minister of a church.

Ariah Park is a small town in the sheep and wheat belt of the western plains of NSW, east of Griffith. I had graduated from a motor bike to a VW Beetle, and covered the ground fast, travelling via Orange where my dad was then minister. Road signs in those days included an unrestricted sign for the open road, so it was legal to drive safely at any speed in the country. Eventually I heard from some parents of the youth in our country church that I drove too fast, so I had to slow down a little.

This was the thesis year of college, so I wrote my thesis on the Beginnings of the Baptist Mission in PNG. The Baptist Historical Society of NSW published it. It is included now in my book *Light on the Mountains: Pioneer Mission in Papua New Guinea*. That year I reapplied to the mission, as they recommended, and was accepted to go to PNG to teach from the 1965.

Our denomination ordained the members of our class from college at the annual assembly in October that year, 1964, in Sydney. In my brief ordination statement I wondered aloud about the non-conformist Baptist position on titles such as Reverend, passed on to us from Rome via Canterbury! Even more, I now wonder about Jesus' position on all such titles, including Teacher and Father (Matthew 23:8-11). He insisted on us being servants.



My new farming friends in the church knew that I was an interim pastor, headed for mission work. So that gave a strong mission flavour to my year there, followed by years of faithful prayer and personal support from the congregation there.

At last I could enjoy the work of ministry without the constant extra demands of lectures, essays and exams. What a relief! Now I could buzz around in my VW Beetle visiting everyone, taking RE in schools, and running a typical range of church programs. I soon adapted to the leisurely, laconic ways of my country friends. I liked being a country boy once again.

There were new experiences, such as conducting my first and only funeral. We needed loud speakers for the crowd outside the packed church building. About a thousand attended. Imagine the funeral procession! We had to wait at the grave for over half an hour until the last of the people in the endless line of cars arrived for the burial.

The Amery family in town kindly provided me with the evening meal each night so that this bachelor minister would eat properly. I also had a single school teacher boarding in the bare manse with me. He attended the Methodist Church over the road from us. He smoked, so I guess some people wondered if their pastor also smoked secretly if they smelled the smoke on my clothes!

Once again I enjoyed the routine of country church life: preparing and leading church services and the mid-week prayer meeting and Bible study, R. E. in the schools once more, youth group and clubs for children after school, and visiting the people in their homes. The seasons guided our discussions, springtime and harvest, or ploughing, sowing, praying for rain, and long lines of trucks taking the harvest to the railway silos. Occasionally a haystack would over heat and burst into flames, destroying all that hard work.

Ariah Park also made an impression on my youngest siblings. I had them with me during one of their school holidays there. They remember how I kept them walking at night after my car ran out of petrol. Those VW Beetles had no gauge then, only a reserve tank lever on the floor, which I had already used.

Heather wrote, "I remember a holiday in Ariah Park and you took us one school holidays down there and we went to some barbecue, I guess on someone's place, and ran out of petrol on the way home and we had to walk in the dark - it seemed like forever."

"I too remember the Aria Park break-down and scary night walk," Lyn recalled. "I think it lasted *all* night; we walked for hours. You also did the cooking as mum and dad had left us with you while they went on a rare time alone on holiday. I remember lumpy custard that you tried to make taste and look better by adding Coco powder in it - *terrible!*"

"I remember the incident at Ariah Park too," Dianne added. "It was in a hay shed, some youth thing that Geoff was doing stuff at. He told us ghost stories as we walked home."

My glass-half-full memories are of a lively youth afternoon with hay rides, farm barbecue, and a social evening with devotions thrown in, then singing songs and telling stories as I walked home with my young sisters and brothers. A night to remember! Apparently they did.

Soon I was packing for my shift north to a totally different world of food and fashion and family in the highlands of New Guinea. Before leaving I had some holiday time with the family in the only family home dad ever owned himself.

## **Gwandalan, Lake Macquarie**

Dad bought lakeside land at Gwandlan, on Lake Macquarie, south of Newcastle. It became a family holiday base after he moved an ex-army hut there and remodelled it into a basic holiday home for our large family. We shared many happy family vacations there. We all pitched in to help with some building and painting, but also found plenty of time to swim and take out our aluminium rowboat. I would sometimes row across that arm of the lake to the shops on the opposite side, and occasionally I rowed to some nearby small islands to explore.

The virgin land had many trees and bushes, with more nearby around the lake – great for exploring as well. Heather remembers our family times of Sunday School under the trees, telling Bible stories there, singing songs and enjoying family life together.

While I was at Aria Park, dad was pastor at Orange church so I would call in there occasionally, and then join the family for holiday visits to Gwandalan as well. After dad left Orange he lived with the family at Gwandalan for a year or so while also working as a supervisor at the nearby power station until he accepted a call to the church at Toronto, also on Lake Macquarie. Toronto became his final pastorate.

That lakeside property increased in value over the years, and after dad's death in 1973 its sale provided a suitable home in Toronto for mum Eileen Maude, where various members of our widely scattered family called in over the years.

So for a year or so, dad's 'ministry' found expression once again in business and the work force. That too is ministry, vital ministry. There too, "To lead is to serve".

My ministry happened to be teaching. It also happened to be as an 'ordained minister' in a range of Christian appointments as a missionary and college teacher.

Now, as I look back across half a century of 'ministry' I suspect that my early ministry was very culture bound, restricted and limited. It was 'normal' then, but I find it abnormal now: too rigid, too comfortable, too predictable, and tied too closely to religious, middle-class Western tradition.

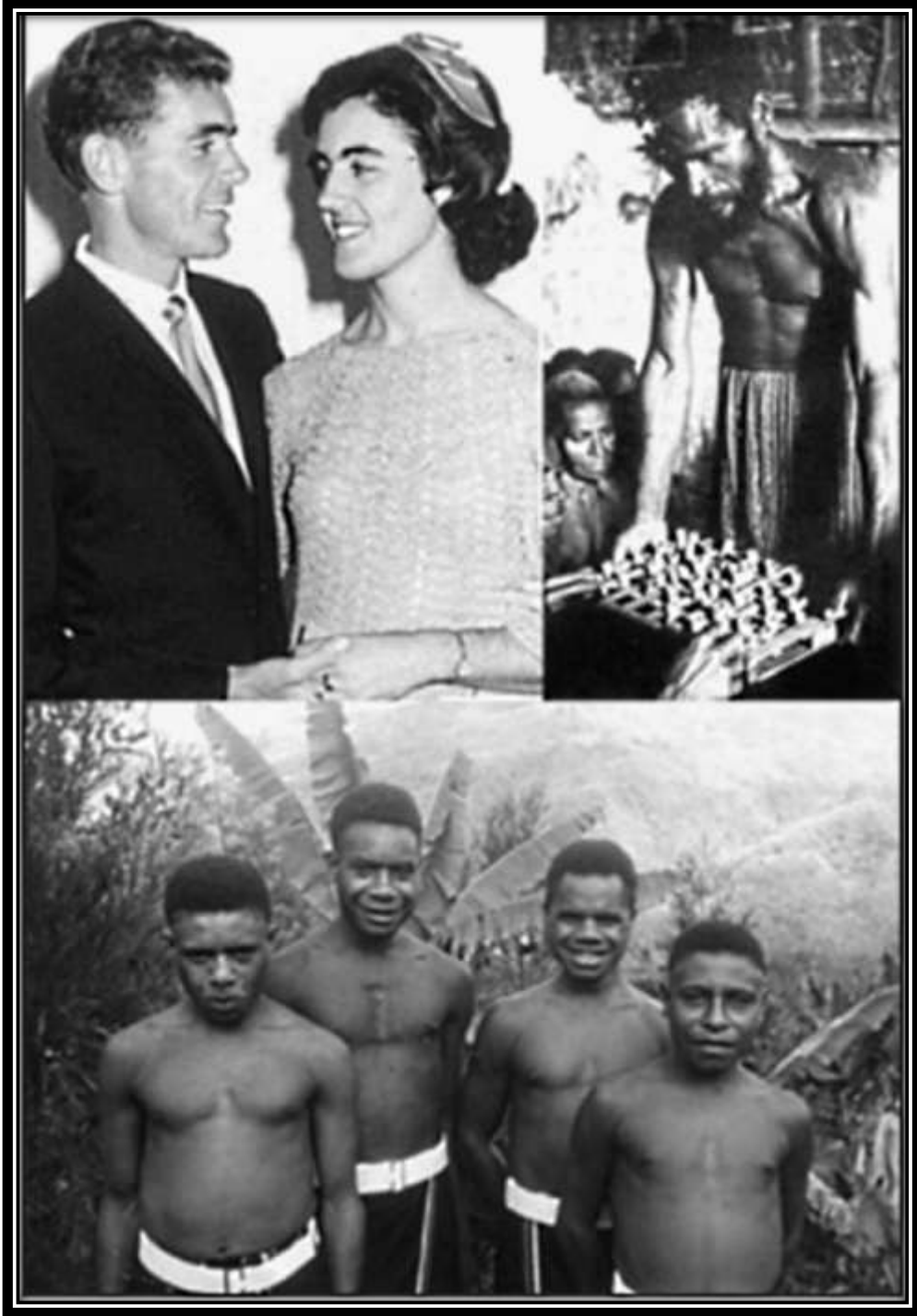
We used the gifts and graces we knew, not realising perhaps that there is so much more available to us all. We explored some God's gifts of grace, but backed off some as well.

Our heritage acknowledged the importance of the Isaiah 11:2 list of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of God. We valued the Romans 5:1-5 list of peace, faith, hope, glory in tribulation, patience, experience and love, and we encouraged people to grow in the Romans 12:4-8 list of prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling and showing mercy. We appreciated the need for the 2 Timothy 1:7 list of power, love and a sound mind or self-discipline, and we recognised the importance of leadership gifts in the Ephesians 4:11 list of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, although being cautious about the first two and rather institutional about the last three.

We tended to steer clear of the controversial gifts in the 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 list of word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discerning spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues, as well as the prioritised list in 1 Corinthians 12:28 of apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healings, helping, guiding, and different kinds of tongues. I think I regarded most of those as relevant for the early church but not for today.

Then, within a decade I discovered their relevance today, not only personally, but in the church and in the community. The rediscovery of the Spirit's infilling and empowering clarified and gave new life and meaning to those biblical passages. I began exploring it in my mission adventures.

**Chapter 4**  
**Mission: trails and trials**



*PNG highlands:* Geoff and Meg on wedding day, village communion, village teachers

My earliest memories include stories of Jesus coming to this world on mission. As a boy I memorised John 3:16 and Matthew 28:18-20 (the Great Commission) all about mission and God's love for us. My parents lived in mission, evangelising 'the lost' and discipling believers, including their children. Many close friends were overseas missionaries, especially Dulcie Cheney in India, who had been like a big sister to us. I read many books about missionaries who gave their lives in mission. Mission was a natural and normal part of life for me.

As I grew older Jesus' incarnational mission impacted me. The Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He lived his mission. Literally. He demonstrated what he taught, even to laying down his life in his sacrificial death, powerful resurrection and triumphant ascension. Jesus lived mission. I began to see mission not so much as a message but as a lifestyle.

"Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words," St Francis said. The medium really is the message. Actions speak louder than words.

Later as I encountered renewal and revival, I found new meaning in Jesus' own descriptions of his mission, such as his message from Isaiah 61:1-3 in Luke 4:18-19 at his home village: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me ..." For what? For mission. To live it out. To demonstrate the Kingdom of God. To declare and demonstrate good news to the poor. To proclaim and bring liberty to the captives. To heal the blind. To set free the oppressed. To announce and authenticate the time of God's favour, his amazing grace. He lived it. He was and is the living Word.

He taught his followers to do the same. They must not just preach faith but demonstrate faith. They must not just have Bible studies on love, but love one another as he loved us. Jesus constantly rebuked religious people who did not practice what they preached. Ouch!

My home environment helped me live out my mission. So did my church environment, perhaps limited but always pointing to greater possibilities. Mission meant living out the good news not only in the local home, church, school and community context, but in the whole world. We glimpsed that through what we called overseas missions.

Stories and photos of pioneering missionaries in the highlands of New Guinea (called Papua New Guinea from 1975 after independence) filled our weekly denominational paper, *The Australian Baptist*, and the monthly mission magazine, *Vision*, from 1948 when I was a boy. They captivated me. They were my own *Boys' Own* adventure stories, following pioneers into "the land that time forgot."

Our family had close ties with our mission work in India through Dulcie Cheney, but the New Guinea accounts grabbed me most. I followed the stories of those first post-war missionaries into the unreached Enga tribal areas in the highland ranges north of Mt Hagen with intense interest. Eventually that interest ripened into research when I wrote a thesis on 'The Beginnings of the New Guinea Mission'. The same year that I wrote that thesis, 1964, I was ordained to the Baptist ministry, and accepted to go to New Guinea as a missionary teacher. Full of zeal, I wanted to go blazing trails and facing trials.

## The Engas



The pioneers, of course, had blazed trails among the Enga tribal people before I arrived. The first pioneers among the Enga tribes began a mission station at Baiyer River (specifically Kumbwareta) on the northern ridge of the wide Baiyer River valley in 1949. The first baptisms in 1956 marked the official birth of the Enga churches.

By 1965, when I arrived, four mission stations were the bases for reaching the whole area. Baiyer River and Lumusa among the Kyaka Engas in the south eventually had road access (in good weather) through the Baiyer River valley to Mt Hagen. Kompiam and Lapalama among the Sau Engas to the north had road access from

Kompiam up the Sau River gorge to Wabag. Apart from the usual trekking, we moved between stations on the weekly Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) bright yellow Cessna single engine planes. They carried people, supplies and mail.

Eventually I was the pioneer missionary at both Pinyapaisa among Kyaka Engas and then at Sauanda among Sau Engas. I also commenced short-term Bible Schools in each area and started the full-time Bible School for the Engas at Kwinkia in the wide Baiyer Valley.

We had our farewell functions in Sydney. Rev Gilbert Wright, one of our theological college lecturers, preached at my farewell service in the Epping church, using Isaiah 35 for his message. He applied the whole chapter to mission, especially the soaring anthem:

*4. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.*

*5. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.*

*6. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*

Concluding with:

*10. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

Our large family and many friends gathered at Sydney airport to say farewell, and then I headed off to “mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, and walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

My young brothers and sisters recall some of that parting adventure:

Philip (3): I remember being more than a little scared by a big brother who showed me his luggage for New Guinea and threatened to put me inside it and take me with him. I wasn't sure he was serious but grabbed mum's hand just in case.

Dianne (6): The night you left the airport to go to PNG the first time, we were all on the observation deck to see the plane go and to wave to you. Lyn (9) was so excited that she vomited, but she was clever enough to do it into a pot plant. Later that night The Beatles arrived and there was a crowd of young people waiting there to welcome them and they got so excited that they smashed and trampled everything in site. Mum wonders what happened to

the plant.

I had packed my meagre belongings into tin trunks (useful for trekking into yet another mission station or village, carried on long poles), and in fact I took far more than I needed. In hindsight, I could have left most of it behind, and just taken some clothes! All my college notes, essays and many books did not really fit New Guinea, although the mission anthropology ones certainly did. We lived what those mission books explored, including these classics:

Brilliant books by Eugene Nida such as *Customs and Cultures*, examining cultural differences with lively examples and humour;

*The Indigenous Church* by Melvin Hodges, an AOG missionary, explaining self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating churches;

Books by Roland Allen, a Spirit-filled Anglican missionary, especially *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*;

*Bridges of God* by Donald McGavran, missionary in India and later a guru of early church growth literature.

I devoured those books, and my bound volumes of *Practical Anthropology* journals. They were my study diet along with the *Good News Bible*, and of course *Nupela Testamen* (New-fella Testament), followed much later by *Buk Baibel*, the Pidgin Bible. Books, however, did not survive well in the tropics. The enormous, hungry cockroaches also devoured the books, especially the tasty glue binding. So most books disintegrated, aided by the tropical moisture from afternoon downpours in the highlands when the equatorial heat cooled and dumped 'bikpela ren' (big fella rain) on us about 4pm daily.

After flying first to Port Moresby for a few days adjustment at a mission transit home, I then flew in the Dakota DC3 workhorse from Port Moresby to Madang and then up into Mt Hagen in the highlands, and on to the government agricultural station grassy airstrip in the wide, breathtaking Baiyer Valley north of Mt Hagen. We sat side-saddle on fold down canvass seats along the sides of the plane with the piles of cargo netted down in the middle.

Then on a hot afternoon at the end of January 1965, I stepped into the 3D living version of all those mission photos and films I had seen, but now with the added sunny glare, heat, smells and people's chatter in Enga and Pidgin. Max Knight and others met us, loaded my trunks and the other supplies onto the mission truck, and we drove the exhilarating 10 kilometres to the large mission station at the northern end of the wide Baiyer River valley.

Max and Pat Knight hosted me, and I lived for a few months in their 'donga' - a woven bamboo cabin at the back of their place. Most missionary homes had dongas for housing the regular visitors and guests coming to Baiyer River, the largest and most accessible of all our mission stations. About 20 missionaries lived there, running the boys and girls primary schools, the Tinsley hospital, the carpentry and trades training schools, the pastors' schools (in-service training for a few days each month), and the hostel for visiting missionaries and international visitors. Max trained village pastors and village teachers.

Some first impressions remain vivid memories. In those initial months I photographed almost everything, so produced hundreds of coloured slides. They trailed me around for over 40 years, in a large biscuit tin with a tight fitting circular lid! I inflicted the best of them on the ever patient congregations during deputation in Australian churches.

I quickly adapted to village church life after the first few weeks, and usually walked to a village church every Sunday, exploring the villages and scenery as well. Those first village visits plunged me into new dimensions of church life in their indigenous culture.

Max and Pat took some of us to the first village church service I attended. We travelled 15 kilometres back into the wide Baiyer Valley on the mission truck, most of us standing up in the back or hanging onto the sides. I stood to enjoy the ever unfolding, fantastic view of high kunai grasslands in the valley surrounded by majestic, towering mountain ranges. Most villages had been built on the tops of the ridges because of tribal fighting and killings. A village in a valley was easy plunder, and soon wiped out. So most villages sat high on mountain ridges.

We parked the truck by the road near Kwinkia at the foot of one of those towering ranges, and then followed the dirt tracks up, and up, and up, usually along ridges leading to higher ridges. We climbed about 1,000 feet in the hot sun of the morning. In those days no village had tanks on top of the ridge, as they do now, so any water had to be carried there from a stream part way down the ridge. Any stream we crossed became our wash room, cool, refreshing, and good to drink, if it did not come through bush where scores of pigs roamed, dug and made a mess.

After about an hour of steady climbing, we arrived at Kendapena village on the ridge top around 9am. People sat about in clusters sharing news. They all came to greet us, shake hands and chatter away in Enga. I listened with admiration as Max and Pat interacted with them fluently. We were dressed in our Sunday best, of course, a light dress for the women and a light short sleeve shirt or T-shirt for us men, with shorts and either boots or thongs (flip flops). I tried boots for a while, but found them too hot and heavy especially when trekking through mud, although I needed them for the long treks across the mountains. Soon I settled for thongs, and later for bare feet like all the locals around the stations or villages where I lived. My feet hardened quickly, but never became as tough as theirs. My students could easily play 'kik bal' (kick ball - soccer) in bare feet, but when I tried I broke a small toe so reverted to sandals for those games.

Sunday clothes for the villagers were the same as for every other day and night. In the sixties that was a small pandanus leaf string cord for women, with narrow pandanus fibre netting in the front and back. Nothing else. The men wore a thick netted long fibre apron in front and soft leaves at the back, both strung from a belt of bamboo or vines, or a well worn old leather belt obtained as a gift or payment. Compared with our hosts, we were overdressed. They gladly accepted our differences, especially as we were seen as rich westerners.

Some of them had washed. Most had not. Dirt remained encrusted on many bodies. After all, a layer of dirt helps to keep one a bit warmer on those mountain ridges at night and in the mornings at 3-5,000 feet high. Soap? The hospital and aid-post staff taught its value, and gave some away, but it seemed a rare commodity in the mountain top villages, though well used by everyone on the mission station.

No one had watches of course, unless it was a missionary or teacher or 'doctor boi' medical orderly. The church service started when everyone was there. So on bright sunny mornings such as we had that day, it may begin around 9 a.m., but on cold, cloudy mornings it could be noon or later. Few knew or cared what the time was. They cared about who was there and who was still to come.

We gladly ate the food they gave us while we waited for more people to arrive. I had sugar cane, raw, chewing on the juicy fibres. Everything grew there lavishly, in fertile ground, drenched daily in the afternoon rains. Paw-paw, pineapple, and bananas grew luscious and big. Like a tourist, stunned with the novelty, I took photos, including one of a beautiful young lady eating a pineapple.

"You won't be able to show that one at home," Max whispered to me. It had not dawned

on me that what was so natural and modest there in the village, including bare essentials in clothing styles, could not be thrown up on a church wall in Australia.

The village church at the edge of a cleared space (the village green!) blended in perfectly with all the other village houses, circular, dirt floor, platted bamboo walks rising to four or five feet, and a thick kunai grass roof shaped like a circular tent around a central pole. So we bowed low to get through the door, and we all sat packed tightly together on the dirt or dry grass, cross-legged in the dimly lit church. Soon our eyes adjusted, but I must admit my nose did not adjust that day. After a few months I realised I no longer noticed the unwashed body odours.

We sang. Well, they sang. Their Enga chants follow a pentatonic scale of five notes, not an octave of eight. Most of their songs were indigenous, created themselves. However, they did include some English hymns, adapted to their own style and translated into their own language. I enjoyed the singing as it rose and fell, expressing their joy and new life in Christ Jesus. Of course I did not understand any of it.

Then we had announcements and sharing. Max whispered brief translations to me. If someone's piglets made too much noise people would tell the woman caring for it to keep it quiet. If a baby began to cry the men on the opposite side of the crowded dirt floor would call out "Give it the breast." I was surprised to hear that most of the announcements were about normal community life (not church life) including arrangements for road building. At that stage of Australia's administration in the highlands the villagers paid no taxes, but the tribes all helped build roads one day a week as community service. They used the provided picks and shovels, which regularly disappeared. When revival swept through that area in the seventies, hundreds of 'stolen' shovels and axes and other tools reappeared at the mission station as people were convicted by the Holy Spirit to return 'borrowed' items! Missionaries then had to ask people to stop returning these borrowed tools, and gave them as permanent gifts.

Max introduced me and invited me to say something, which he interpreted. I gave my first Enga message, in English! After saying how pleased and impressed I was to be at my first Enga service, I noted how we all had to bow low to come through the door into their church building, and compared that with responding to Jesus' invitation and declaration, "I am the door." Those who enter his house or kingdom do so through him, by humbly believing in him.

The village pastor could not read (few adults could then) so one of the school boys read a Bible passage in Enga from a duplicated translation. The pastor gave his message, studied some days before at the mission station's pastors' school. I really admired the way our culturally sensitive missionaries worked with the village leaders and pastors.

Although it was impossible to avoid importing some of our Christian traditions, the mission staff tried to avoid doing that. Church life, however, did reflect many western traditions. For example, it struck me as odd that communion followed western styles using symbolic cubes of sweet potato (no bread in the village) and berry juice passed around in little bamboo cups (like thimbles). Their way of 'breaking bread' together in the village usually meant sharing some of the many varieties of sweet potato whole, or broken in half, as they sat around in their houses. That's so much closer to what Jesus did!

The service closed with more singing and we filed out to sit or stand around together for a while. We had time for sharing more information, disseminating news from the schools or hospital, and planning any future events, as well as eating together again. Then we made our way carefully back down the mountain track into the wide valley below, and I rejoiced all the way back in the truck thinking, so that's church in New Guinea. Even 'going to church' there was rather western, having a specific church building and a meeting in it. New Testament



churches looked more like the Chinese house churches.

At least the villages churches looked like a large house, useful as a general meeting place for any gathering. Later on, as cash increased in the villages from selling coffee, many tribes built a church with an iron roof. That had the great advantage of providing a village water tank, usually full from the regular rains. However it also had the great disadvantage of the unlined roof becoming an oven on those hot days, or an amplified drum when it rained, drowning out the speaking and even the singing. I suspect prestige and modernisation over-ruled comfort.

Enga pastors evangelized and disciplined their people. They conducted all the baptisms and village teaching. We were support staff, and I learned to watch and appreciate how well they led a strong and rapidly growing indigenous church.

My mission experience wonderfully mixed work and relaxation. Was trekking work or a holiday hike? Was exploring those rugged ranges work or pleasure? Was visiting New Guinea's coastal towns for inter-mission conferences and seminars work or a vacation? Was flying around constantly in yellow MAF Cessnas work or adventure? Was relaxing with a great missionary classic book or another translation of the Bible work or relaxation? Was our annual vacation in the mission's holiday home at Wewak on the coast work as well as holiday? It all merged. The usual boundaries or barriers seemed to melt away. Work was pleasure. The secular became the sacred. All of life was mission, and mission was a whole lifestyle. I lived out that mission vocation teaching in schools and Bible Schools.

## Teaching in Schools



I arrived in New Guinea at the beginning of the school year so immediately began teaching in English using the Australian government's Jacaranda Press materials especially produced for New Guinea. Following World War II, Australia administered New Guinea as one of its territories until independence.

Students wanted to learn English because English speakers found many vocational opportunities. Teaching in English slowed down my learning Enga, however I began using Enga as much as I could. I later studied elementary Enga to get started on the basics of Enga grammar and idioms.

School life echoed schools at home but with brown bodies and chatter in tongues unknown to me. I enjoyed school life in New Guinea. The mission established primary schools using English on all the mission stations, and village schools in the villages where indigenous teachers taught in Enga and Pidgin. Most children and many young adults began to learn literacy and numeracy in their small bush village school, and the brightest or most ambitious quickly moved to the mission school to learn English. The brightest or most ambitious of those moved on to high school in Mt Hagen, and some to university or teachers college in Port Moresby. As the years passed beyond the sixties more educational opportunities opened up locally including trade schools and Bible Schools.

### (1) Baiyer River

As a new, single missionary teacher I had my baptism into New Guinea school life at the large

primary school at the main mission station at Baiyer River where most of the school teachers were missionaries, assisted by indigenous aides in those days. Later, especially after independence in 1975, most teachers were trained indigenous teachers. Fitting in with Enga culture, men taught in the boys' school and women taught in the girls' school. School buildings, like many on the station, often had milled timber floors with the typical woven bamboo walls and a thick, cool, kunai grass roof.

School structure followed the Australian pattern, starting by 8 or 9am and finishing by 2 or 3pm in the hot afternoon. School text books provided relevant materials for New Guinea, clear, cute and comprehensive. Even Grade 1 books could be adapted to adult learning. Coloured pictures, drawings and photos depicted typical village or town scenes in New Guinea.

The Baiyer River mission station had been established 15 years before I arrived, so the school, and hospital, functioned well, and the pupils were young, typical primary school age. No one really knew their birthday or birth year, but if a child could touch their left ear with their right arm reaching over their head, they were about 5 or 6 and eligible to start! The same applied for left-handers touching their right ear.

However, in the more recently established mission stations, such as at Lapalama in the more remote Sau Valley district, where I taught after a few months at Baiyer River, the Grade 1 students were often teenagers. Chiefs wanted their young men and women to learn English. I had one Grade 1 female student who left school later that year to be married! So sometimes our text books and teaching methods were adapted to suit adult education, even at primary school level.

Pupils wore lap-laps (sarongs) for their school uniforms, as did the hospital staff and even the village pastors. Different colours indicated different vocations or roles. Pastors wore blue lap-laps as their clerical garb! Our pupils wore green. We had the usual blackboards (increasingly becoming green-boards), with white and coloured chalk, and pupils wrote in the ever useful exercise books. Each class had its supply of the government text books and reading books for that grade. We also had sets of locally made and colourfully painted wooden shapes for geometry and for set theory in modern mathematics. Teachers studied a few pages ahead of the pupils in mastering modern maths introduced to New Guinea in the sixties.

Our students behaved extremely well. They knew they were the privileged few, and any punishment, especially expulsion, would bring great shame not only on the pupil but also on their family and tribe. They lived and thought communally, not individually. Older pupils, or natural leaders in the class, quickly kept everyone in line. That's also what they did in the village. I was beginning to enjoy the benefits of communal living and thinking!

Mission schools needed to be boarding schools with hostels for pupils who came from the surrounding villages in their area and walked home at weekends. So after classes finished each afternoon, most students would work in the communal school food gardens, growing what they would eat. They took it literally that if anyone would not work, neither would they eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10). This applied, of course, to most Engas living on the mission station, as well as in the villages. Fortunately missionaries were not limited to their food gardening skills, otherwise most would be living only on paw paw, pineapple, bananas, tomatoes, and sweet potatoes. Enterprising staff, however, included food gardening in their busy lives.

We used Pidgin a lot. New Guinea Pidgin developed first as a trade language but later evolved into New Guinea's national language using many English words in a Melanesian context and grammar. The meanings of words reflected that culture, not ours. For example,

'boi' meant male, not boy. Similarly, 'dai' (die) didn't mean die. I was worried when I first asked why a pupil was not at school and they all told me "Em i dai" (him he die). It actually meant he was too sick to come. If he 'dai finis' (die finish), then he really died.

I often attended the Kyaka-Enga service on Sunday mornings at Baiyer River, but also really enjoyed trekking to the villages with my school pupils to visit village churches as well. Then on Sunday nights we held the English service in a small chapel.

A few weeks after I arrived one of my tooth fillings was dislodged, probably from chewing on raw sugar cane. Hospital staff could pull teeth out, as they sometimes needed to do for villagers, but they did not have the qualifications or equipment to handle fillings. Fortunately the Evangelical Lutheran hospital, a day's trek over the ranges, had a dentist, a good one. So guided by an Enga young man I trekked from Baiyer across the Wapanamunda range on an invigorating Saturday's trek. My guide knew Pidgin, not English, so our conversation was limited to that. He walked fast in his bare feet, so I didn't have spare breath to talk anyway. We covered 20 kilometres of breath-taking scenery across mountain ranges and gorges with very little flat land anywhere from Baiyer River past Lumusa and Pinyapaisa and over the huge ranges to Wapanamunda, arriving at their hospital late in the afternoon, unannounced. Supported by American staff and money, their station looked very modern. The American dentist quickly obliged with a new filling and checked my teeth thoroughly. I never needed further dental work until long after I returned to Australia. My young guide met the people he wanted to visit and was ready to lead me back to Baiyer River the next day. I was refreshed after a night's rest in their mission guest house.

During those first few months I began habits which became a pattern in my missionary life through two terms covering six years in New Guinea. Some of the most significant habits, I believe, were these:

**1. Reading different translations of the Bible,** especially the New Testament. In those years I read through many versions of the New Testament, especially *The Good News Bible* (originally Good News for Modern Man), Moffat's and Philip's translations, the *Revised Standard Version*, and others. I would skim through the Old Testament then read a few versions of the New Testament each year. Later, back home, I continued reading other versions, but at a much slower pace, and so discovered and came to love the more inclusive versions including the *New Revised Standard Version* and *New International Version*.

**2. Keeping a diary.** Each day I liked to note a phrase or words from one of the verses in my morning Bible reading. Each Christmas my family mailed me a Collins pocket diary with a pencil, a week to an opening. I accumulated over 30 of them, 1965-1995. Then stupidly I threw them all out because we moved from a family home to a small unit in Brisbane, so we dramatically downsized everything. How dumb to discard diaries! When I occasionally looked back over them, I was amazed to note how those daily scripture entries in red biro traced solid reading of the Bible, especially what the Holy Spirit impressed on me. I added sets of the colourful New Guinea postage stamps scattered through my dairies as those historic stamps became available.

**3. Writing letters.** I typed hundreds of letters. I typed more quickly than I could write. On some mail days, the regular Tuesday visits of the MAF Cessna, we would have a couple of visits by the MAF pilot as he shuttled people and goods between stations. So I would quickly scan my mail from the mail bag in the first plane load and dash off quick replies to the family in time to catch the last plane load for that day. I soon learned to duplicate interesting circulars, at least I found them interesting! Then I could quickly add a personal sentence or

two at the end. Many of those newsletters or prayer letters focused on life on a mission station, or in the villages, or at school, or at Bible School. Kind friends in Australia, especially from Aria Park, duplicated my circulars from the stencils I sent them and mailed the circulars to interested and praying people.

**4. Staying healthy.** Those were the fittest years of my life. We lived by the adage, early to bed and early to rise. The power generator operated from about 6-10 p.m., and we rose at dawn at 6am. We bought very healthy food from the village people on market days, and grew some ourselves, supplemented by trade store orders delivered by plane each week. At Lapalama we enjoyed fresh milk, a nice change from the usual powdered milk. We had abundant fresh water from our tanks. And we walked. We hiked. We trekked. Constantly. So those years in our twenties and thirties developed strong bodies, provided constant mental challenges, and opened many spiritual discoveries.

**5. Listening.** Of course we had to listen, over and over again, to learn the languages - Enga dialects and Pidgin. More importantly, we needed to listen to learn about the culture, and what the church may be like in that culture. Although my job always involved teaching, I needed to listen and learn more than I taught, and then teach out of that learning. I was being baptised into another culture, another way of life, another expression of the church, another view of the Bible such as from a communal, tribal, non-materialistic perspective, and one much closer to the culture of Bible times.

After a few months orientation and experience at Baiyer River, and when more teaching staff arrived, I moved to Lapalama to teach in the two room school there.

## (2) Lapalama



**School Boys**

Our mission worked in four districts of the Enga people, Baiyer River and Lumusa among Kyaka-Engas and Kompiam and Lapalama in the rugged Sau Valley to the north. I taught at Lapalama school in my first year there after a few months at Baiyer River.

Warren and Mavis Brown, with their young family, organised station life at Lapalama, the newest and smallest mission station then, where I ran the two teacher school. My assistant Keyane Tangaipi, an indigenous teacher, taught Grades 1 and 2, and I had the rest. Lapalama had two milled timber homes, and the two room school was also made from milled timber – a modern school! All the other buildings such as the aid post (medical centre), store, hostels for students, employees' houses, pastors' school, and an original missionaries' home were the usual platted bamboo with thick kunai grass roofs. Indigenous nurses ran the aid post, assisted by visits from Baiyer hospital staff for a few weeks at a time. Warren and Mavis produced endless booklets of teaching materials in Sau-Enga, especially for village pastors and teachers, as well as for the medical workers.

Usually we visited a village church each Sunday morning and then on Sunday nights we had our own staff devotions in English, including any local English speakers who wanted to join in. That was a small handful at Lapalama, compared to the large English service for staff on Sunday nights at Baiyer River.

At Lapalama I moved into a modern home and a modern school and felt like a

king! Hopefully I remained a servant leader, not an insensitive colonialist. However we did have western comforts and facilities such as typewriters and duplicators essential to our work. All mission stations enjoyed electricity for about four hours each night, so mechanical staff kept the generators operating as a priority. I liked playing my vinyl LP records, especially the Billy Graham choirs and a wonderful set of light classical records as well as the intriguing *Sound of Music* released in 1965. Those hills were alive with the sound of music, western songs as well as Enga chants. Forty years later, CDs and DVDs have replaced my LP records, but the same songs entertain my grandchildren.

At one stage when Warren and Mavis were on furlough I ran the station myself. Fortunately that was in my second year there and I could use Pidgin well, and had begun to converse in Sau-Enga. Although I was in charge for a while, local leaders supervised the main work of the station staff. I met with them each morning for prayer and sharing information. One main responsibility in running the station involved speaking on the regular half hour daily mission 'sked' (schedule) on two-way radio. Each mission had an allocated half hour and all staff tuned in each day. It provided our entertainment, updates and news.

Important tasks each week on the skeds included organising the weekly Tuesday visits of the Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) flights to all our four stations, all of which needed to keep their airstrips mowed and repaired. The Lapalama airstrip ran down the side of the ridge, so heavy rains often produced unwanted channels needing to be filled. We also had a few cows for fresh milk, and they loved the fresh grass on the airstrip, but did not know when it was Tuesday. Sometimes the agricultural workers forgot to keep them off the airstrip that day, much to the frustration of more than one pilot who had to buzz us to get the airstrip cleared.

I remember one emergency when I was in charge. Village aid post orderlies and an attending crowd of relatives and stretcher-bearers carried in a woman with a retained placenta after giving birth. So I had to get onto the two-way radio and organise an emergency MAF flight to take her to the Baiyer River hospital. Imagine my non-medical explanations of her condition! That entertained the mission staff listening on their transistor radios. All I could do was put the local medical aid-post nurse on and let him explain. However, in that culture women did not like men dealing with childbirth. Usually the female nurses did all that, and doctors only came in for complications. Well this was life-threatening. The hospital staff decided it was serious enough to get a Cessna in to get her to hospital. She recovered.



I enjoyed life at Lapalama, and like most people there had bare feet most of the time, so they hardened. No one at school had shoes, including the other teacher, Keyane. He often wore native dress, the string net in front and leaves behind. Most people did that there then. Most men grew beards. It's easier to trim a beard than to shave, so very few shaved. I grew a beard also. However mine seemed to be rather thin compared to their thick curly black beards, and mine had strange colours like ginger mixed with light brown. After the novelty wore off, I shaved it off.

"I received a photo from you of yourself taken in New Guinea with a beard and another with it shaven off - accompanied by some of the actual beard!" my young sister Heather remembered.

We trekked a lot, mostly to local villages at weekends. My longest trek took a week with Warren Brown and some pastors from Lapalama over the 8,000 foot ranges further to the north to Yangis in the remote Wapi area, a mission and evangelistic outreach of the Enga church. The

Engas sent pastors there to pioneer a new church in that area. I remember returning from some of the longer treks, so tired, and forcing myself to just keep taking one step after another, until at long last the mission station ridge came into view. Home never looked so good.

At weekends I continued to visit different village churches. Usually my school pupils walked with me to their village. That gave them a chance to practise their English, and gave me an opportunity to practise my Enga. So we had strange conversations where they used poor English and I used poor Enga as we talked together!

One of my brightest pupils, the son of the most respected pastor in the district, lived in a village about three hours walk up into the ranges. I liked going to that village church from time to time as the pastor was such a godly, compassionate and intelligent man. However, the first time I went there the pastor amazed me. There was the highly regarded pastor, sitting with the men, unwashed, with a dirty laplap, smoking the home grown local tobacco rolled leaf, as many men did, and he had a runny nose as well – and of course no handkerchief, not even an old cloth. Further to my conservative astonishment, when we all went into the grass hut church for the meeting, the pastor just put out his unfinished rolled tobacco leaf and stuck it between his curly, dirty hair and his unwashed ear.

At school we had other expectations. Pupils had to wash. Every Monday when they returned from the village the indigenous staff would inspect the heads of students to find any lice. Where lice lived, that student received a very close haircut and an extra shampoo. School on Monday mornings sometimes looked like a barber shop. Actually most students seemed to like getting a haircut and shampoo.

Early in my second year at Lapalama, I walked with a group of about a dozen young men from Baiyer River to Lapalama. The Baiyer school did not have enough staff to teach them just then, so I did at Lapalama. That walk took us two days. We slept in a village in the ranges on the way there, dining on the usual sweet potato in the mountain village. We had to cross two huge gorges, each with a swinging vine bridge at the bottom of the gorge, strung across raging waters. A great adventure!

The vine bridge over the Sau River led to the track up the ridge to Lapalama. We could walk to that river and bridge in about half an hour from the mission station, and I sometimes took the school there for swimming lessons. Many of the older boys liked to swing off the vine bridge and drop into the water, so they taught me to do that too! The last time we swam there was in the wet season, and I had not realised how swiftly the river flowed then. One of our biggest, strongest lads swam too close to the rocks where the river narrowed, and it swept him away downstream, with him thrashing and yelling but unable to get out.

I had a whole school crying, lamenting and howling as it dawned on them that he had been swept downstream. Older boys leapt through the bush along the sides of the river heading down the river looking for their mate or a drowned body. I had to stay with the school pupils, and I would not have been nearly as fast as those boys were, sprinting over rocks and through bushes till they were out of sight around the bend in the river.

The young man who had been swept away was named Kyaka, and he was a Kyaka Enga who had walked with his friends and me from Baiyer River to Lapalama. I was already imagining and dreading the repercussions. In their vendetta culture I would immediately become the prime target for a pay-back killing. However, their culture also accepted that anyone from the offender's tribe could be killed instead, so I had put the whole Lapalama community in peril. Christians, of course, usually did not follow those tribal customs, but not everyone was Christian.

I once saw a corpse lying on a log bridge, the victim of a pay-back killing. He had been axed in his neck because he had committed adultery with a relative of his murderer. That murderer then ran straight to the nearest police station or government officer, for protection, knowing that anyone from his victim's tribe may then try to kill him in another pay-back killing.

Our prayers are really earnest, sincere and desperate in such emergencies. We had to wait nearly half an hour for the boys to return, shouting as they came. They were shouting in fast Enga but some students explained to me in Pidgin that "Em I dai" (Him, he die). Now the language was really confusing. I wanted to know if he did die. So I tried to clarify it, "Em i dai finis?" Plain English words had other meanings in Pidgin, so it took a while to clarify that "Em i no dai finis. Em i dai liklik tasol." (Him, he no die finish. Him he die a little bit, that's all).

My student Kyaka staggered back very battered and bleeding, but alive. We were all thanking God as we celebrated together. The students who found him said that the only thing that worried Kyaka when he eventually climbed onto a rock was that in all the tumbling he had lost his laplap. I was thankful he had not lost his life.

The next day Warren Brown told me that a deputation of leaders had asked him to make sure I never took the students swimming again! I learned from Kyaka, years later when I returned for a holiday visit in the nineties when he was then a senior church leader among the Engas, that some people in his tribe did want to kill me, but he had talked them out of it.

That was not the only time I had been in danger in New Guinea. As teachers, and later as Bible School teachers, we sometimes flew to inter-mission conferences for in-service training. I accompanied two young Enga ladies to Madang and then on to Rabaul for a Christian Education conference. In Madang I walked with them around the town and then back to our mission guest house. The next morning the night watchman at the guest house told me he had found a group of angry young men with knives creeping toward my room intending to kill me. They thought I was another white man who had taken two of their girls into my room. Fortunately the night watchman explained that the girls had their own room, and I was their missionary friend and guardian. This guardian was asleep and unaware of the danger.

### **(3) Tekin**

The mission had established stations among the Min tribal people in the highland ranges to the west, close to the West Irian (then West Papua) border. The largest was at Telefolmin, also a government administration station for the whole area. A long day's trek from Telefolmin brought you to Tekin, a small mission station with a pastors' school, a primary school and Aid Post. Normally two missionary families lived there. The senior missionary would care for all the village churches, helping to train village pastors, and teaching staff ran the small school.

After I had been teaching at Lapalama school for a year the mission leadership appointed me to Tekin as their relief teacher and school supervisor for part of the time that the teacher and his family were away on furlough. As Tekin was a remote and recent outpost station, facilities were minimal but adequate. We had the usual generator to provide electric power from dusk to 9 or 10 p.m., kerosene fridges, and strong bush material buildings. It was higher and cooler in the ranges than the Enga area, so we wore jumpers in the cool evenings.

I was familiar with the school curriculum materials, and discovered that many people in the Telefolmin and Tekin areas used Pidgin extensively. The Min people had so many different dialects, being scattered through huge mountain ranges, and the government officials all used

Pidgin, so it had become well known and well used throughout the whole area, much more so than among the Engas.

Again I gained new experiences among the Tekin people, teaching basic English, and trekking to some villages with mission staff at weekends to attend village services. I enjoyed wide ranging talks with missionaries and their assistants on the trek and saw one of their baptismal services as a group of new believers, mostly young, publicly declared their commitment to Christ. As with the Engas, they held their very public service in a dammed creek forming a baptismal pool.

Being fit and healthy I took the opportunity to make the long trek from Tekin to Telefolmin, and enjoyed a weekend with the staff there, learning about their approach to mission, evangelism and discipleship. Then I returned on the weekly MAF flight to Tekin, famous for its unusual and alarming airstrip in a narrow valley, with a slight curve in it! Fortunately the plane always slowed enough to negotiate the sloping curve on landing, and took off down the slope with sufficient speed after the curve to take off.

While I was there, John Halverson, an MAF pilot from New Zealand, disappeared while on a flight out of Telefolmin. For a couple of weeks the government staff at Telefolmin co-ordinated search planes, meticulously combing the whole area looking for the wreckage in the dense, high forests of the mountain ranges. So I had a few days as a passenger on some of those light planes, searching. Many other commercial operators joined the MAF staff and its fleet in the search, but no one found anything. The thick jungle had swallowed up all evidence of John's disappearance.

We all used MAF Cessnas for regular movement around the mission stations. Most village people who had never seen a road, car or truck, were familiar with the yellow Cessna arriving faithfully every week on the mission airstrip, and many of them when sick had been flown to the local hospital or many pastors and leaders attended conferences in central stations or towns using MAF. Most pilots were our good friends and skilled aviators, negotiating rapidly changing weather patterns and primitive airstrips with amazing ability.

#### **(4) Sauanda**

During my third year I commenced some short-term Bible Schools among the Engas, and was then asked to start a new school in a village called Sauanda about 5 kilometres up the Sau Valley from Kompiam. So for the last six months of my first term, while still single, I lived in that village by the river on land set aside for the school. We had basic bush buildings, one school room, my house and cook house, and my assistant's house for the 'haus boi'. All were made of woven bamboo with thick grass roofs. One night my assistant stoked his house fire too much and sparks flew into the dry grass roof, so it soon caught fire and burned down completely. He quickly rescued his few belongings, mainly some clothes. Within a day, the villagers built him a new one room house.

I enjoyed starting the new school and teaching Grade 1. My students were keen and receptive, and learned fast. Each year the school added a new Grade 1 class with another teacher, usually a trained local teacher. When I returned there on my holiday visit in the nineties I discovered that after the school had grown to its full size with seven or eight classes and teachers, a pay-back war erupted between that village and a neighbouring one and in the fighting the whole school was burned down. They had to build all over again higher up the ridge. That pay-back war started because someone had stolen some food from someone's



garden, and it soon escalated into tribal fighting. Such was life in New Guinea.

There I also learned a bit more about the local spirit culture. One night a man arrived, as many did, wanting to talk. He was different. If a brown skinned man can be white or grey, he was. He was scared. Really scared. He chattered away in fast Enga and I missed most of it, so had to get others to explain what he was saying to me. They told me he had seen a local spirit, the spirit of a man gliding along toward him just above the track. They believed it was the spirit of someone who had been murdered. Well, I was not familiar with familiar spirits or that aspect of their culture, but I knew about spirits from the Bible. So we talked about Jesus' victory over everything including the spirit world, and I encouraged him to trust in Jesus not only for his own protection, but for the leaders to also trust in Jesus to free their people, fully.

Conversion for Engas meant life commitment, not just a response to an altar call or an invitation in a meeting. I never saw one altar call or invitation for salvation at any time in New Guinea. People chose to follow Jesus, usually after teaching and discussion. They chose in huge numbers, usually in communal groups where they discussed and agreed on things together. Then after further teaching they publicly signified their commitment to Christ in baptism, New Testament style. Village pastors led all that, and baptised their own people.

All the mission stations had pastors' schools to teach the mainly illiterate pastors about the Bible. Pastors, like chiefs, held great respect in the community. People really listened to them, and many of them led huge numbers of their people to faith in Christ.

## **Teaching in Bible Schools**

At that time in the sixties we had no Bible Schools in our area. I discussed this with many missionaries, and I was keen to teach in Bible School once I had passed my language exams and could at least speak and preach in basic Enga. Senior missionaries led regular pastor school and occasional Bible School courses for keen leaders, but no full-time Bible School existed there then.

The mission staff discussed this, on and off, for a year, including discussing some papers presented at the annual staff conference at Baiyer River. Eventually, after a lot of consultation with the pastors, we all decided to hold a three-month short-term Bible School in Enga and Pidgin in each of the four districts, based in Baiyer River and Lumusa in the south, and Kompiam and Lapalama in the north. I organised and led them, and the pastors and mission staff approved and adjusted the proposed curriculum.

We all used Gestetner duplicators in those days, and like everyone else, I was soon churning out endless stencils with my typewriter and with drawing implements, and even inserting a marvellous range of stencilled pictures, photos and cut outs. We all produced translations, notes, teaching aids, and many kinds of booklets. These included Bible passages, stories, health manuals, agricultural and building guidelines, and weekly devotionals.

The mission gave me the great opportunity to visit other Bible Schools in New Guinea so that I could see what others did. That was informative and reassuring. We had been blessed as a mission. We worked among a very receptive people who showed a lot of leadership in church growth and mission themselves. Our Bible Schools could contribute to that.

## **(1) Pinyapaisa (Lumusa area)**

I started the first short-term Bible School in the Lumusa area at a mountain village called Pinyapaisa, about four hour's walk beyond the Lumusa plateau. Being single I found it easy to move there, although later on Seaton and Barbara Arndell lived there as well. Strong young men earned carriers' wages by carrying my tin trunks on long poles, and they even carried a kerosene fridge tied to long poles as well. Although I lived in a village setting, I still had 'mod cons' such as a fridge, a typewriter and a portable Gestetner duplicator.

I had to create most of my teaching materials. We did, however, have some booklets in Enga including translations of some books of the New Testament. We also had *Nupela Testamen* (New-fellow Testament) in Pidgin, and a Pidgin Bible Story book. The rest I created. Later on Tony Cupit, with Mapusiya Kolo and others, completed the Kyaka-Enga translation of the New Testament, printed in the seventies just in time to help the people understand the revival that swept through the whole area from 1973.

I taught basic Bible information, but also practical training for village teachers and young pastors-in-training. Many of my students were, or would be, village teachers or village pastors. So I found myself running a short-term teachers college and a short-term ministry training college, called a Bible School. I taught these young village leaders literacy and numeracy in Enga and Pidgin as well as the more usual Bible School subjects such as the life of Christ, Bible overview, the early church, and teaching and ministry skills. And they were teaching me a lot about their own culture as well.

I was teaching them how to use Pidgin resources, and they were teaching me Enga, but now I was mixing up their Kyaka-Enga in the south with my Sau-Enga from the north. Alas I never fully sorted it all out! Some words were the same or similar in the two dialects, but many were different. They often laughed at my muddled Enga.

It was adult education with stimulating cross-cultural exploration of Jesus' life and teaching and life in the early church, applied to their village life and culture. They were teaching me as I was teaching them. We often started with a Bible passage and then I wanted them to tell me what that meant in their own culture.

They pointed out that they were much closer to the Bible culture than I was. They shared everything, or had everything in common, as in the New Testament church. They knew a lot about spirits, and Jesus certainly took authority over a lot of unclean spirits. They knew a lot about the power of demons, curses and magic. That was a lively part of the Book of Acts and the early church as well.

When revival swept through that whole Enga area in the seventies, the pastors and village teachers had already explored what it could mean, and they seemed to understand it more than many missionaries, and moved in the Holy Spirit's authority, just as in the New Testament.

## **(2) Kompiam**

After three months at Pinyapaisa in the Lumusa district, I moved to Kompiam in the Sau Valley, again carting all my worldly goods in my tin trunks. Carriers walked them back to Lumusa and then an MAF Cessna flew them and me to Kompiam. Again for three months I taught village teachers and pastors in a basic Bible School, this time working with the more familiar Sau-Enga dialect of that area.

There I produced an interesting 8mm film of the Good Samaritan story, depicted in the

Enga culture. The students loved it and became overnight movie stars in that area. I mailed my 8mm films to Australia for developing, then spliced and edited them into a movie. So I was director, editor, and producer, but my students were the stars. When we showed the film in the villages (using a portable generator) it was the first time those people had seen a movie. They thought we had filmed real life, and were really upset about the poor village man attacked and robbed and left to die, but they were relieved that he did not 'die finish.' Although the uncaring local pastor and village teacher both ignored the victim, at least a stranger from a foreign tribe helped him and took him to the aid post.

Again I was visiting village churches at weekends with my students. I didn't need to preach. They did, as well as the local pastor. Garth and Val Manning, the senior missionaries, helped in many practical ways. Val showed me how to create interesting Gestetner stencils for booklets and newsletters using pictures and photos added with stencil glue. I went trekking with Garth into the remote Wali mountains across the Sau River gorge as he visited villages to encourage pastors and explore areas where people asked for or needed a pastor and a church.

While I was there the people of Mamanda, half way between Kompam and Baiyer River, offered flat land to establish the central Enga Bible School. So we trekked there to investigate possibilities. We surveyed the proposed station area, including marking out an adequate airstrip site. It seemed logical, and opportune, being central to all four districts of the Enga area. However, it was remote and would need a huge investment of funds and staff. The following year the already existing land at Kwinkia in the Baiyer Valley became available for the Bible School at little extra cost.

While I was at Kompam I began a stimulating correspondence with Meg Bowman, then teaching in the school at Lapalama where I had been. Later that year I started the new school up the Sau Valley at Sauanda and would sometimes head back to Kompam on my motor bike on Friday afternoon, and then trek across to Lapalama to visit Meg. We both returned to Australia in December, 1967, became engaged, and married in May, 1968, near the end of six months furlough.

### **(3) Lapalama**

Married, we returned to Lapalama in 1968 where Meg taught in the school again, and I ran their short-term Bible School. As at Kompam, I was back in the Sau Enga area, using that Sau-Enga dialect and Pidgin with my students. Again I was teaching young men who would be village teachers or pastors.

Now Meg's involvement with the students enriched my teaching. We often had them in the house for discussions or eating together. Both of us kept very busy preparing materials for Bible School and for school, and I had begun external studies in education with the University of Queensland.

Those months back in Lapalama seemed to race by very quickly. Again we accompanied our students to village churches at weekends, and now I was seeing more of my students involved in preaching or Sunday School teaching.

I loved to see them applying what they were learning. Of course, they had been doing plenty of that before we started the Bible School, but that just made our classes all the more relevant and interesting because I was teaching many of them on-the-job with in-service continuing education.

#### (4) Kwinkia (Baiyer area)

Early the next year in 1969 we moved with all our goods, including our wedding gifts, back to the Baiyer River area. The mission's agricultural training land at Kwinkia in the wide Baiyer valley had become available to establish a Bible School, so we moved there into the large bush house on that land, previously the home for Rob and Win Thompson. They had trained agricultural workers there, but more recently they worked at the Baiyer River station where they trained pastors as well as supervising agricultural developments in the villages including growing coffee and running cattle for income.



The local people at Kwinkia built a new large classroom for the Bible School (photo with senior pastor Sai speaking) and I started the Bible School there, once again mixing my Sau-Enga with their Kyaka-Enga. So at the beginning of 1969, we began the full-time Bible School there. That had been a long range plan of the mission and the pastors. The pastors from each of the four districts chose eight men to be the first full-time students, committed to two or three years of Bible School. Pastors from Lapalama also urged the mission to take three extra students from the even more remote Wapi area around Yangis, a missionary outreach of the Enga church. So we did. Those three men from Wapi had less education than the others, and needed more help with literacy, but they showed great commitment and strong faith. They became revival leaders later on.

In our first year there at the new Enga Baptist Bible School, I was the inaugural principal and teacher. Our students were very committed, and really keen. Teaching them was not like work, but a privilege and pleasure. Some were married and had children, so our hostel area included many small homes for young families. Meg taught the wives literacy and well as practical skills for home and church life. Our first child was born that year at the Tinsley Hospital at Baiyer River, and quickly became a special attraction in the nearby village as well as with the students and their families.

Every morning we had Enga style classes, often more like discussions and story-telling, the way Engas would do it, sitting around the village in the shade of the tall bamboos. During the afternoons the students worked in their food gardens and at night had prayer groups or studied by the light of kerosene lamps.

We regularly ate with groups of them in our home, the eight from a district at a time, and the 11 from Lapalama, introducing them to our cutlery and some of our food, as well as sitting together on the floor Enga style, sharing their food. At least to some degree we became part of their communal living.

I prepared teaching materials in both Enga and Pidgin. That included opportunities to produce some Pidgin materials for wider national use. For example, Scripture Union in New Guinea published daily reading notes on different books of the Bible, and asked me to write their notes for the book of James. I enjoyed writing devotional comments on each section of James' small practical letter, applied to the South Pacific communal culture.

Kongoe Sipwanji joined me at Kwinkia to teach in the second year. One of the strong leaders from the Lumusa area, he had just graduated from the Christian Leaders Training College in Banz in the highlands where the teaching was in English. So now I had welcome help in preparing materials we needed for our very practical subjects, exploring the Bible, the church, ministry, teaching, and discipleship. We also included practical teaching on agriculture

and community life, usually taken by visiting specialists from the mission.

I am grateful to the mission and the Enga church for the privilege and experience of inaugural teaching in their Bible Schools. I'm sure I grew at least as much as the students in discovering biblical and ministry truths relevant to their culture and to me. Cross-cultural experience like that took me through a paradigm shift in my understanding of the Bible and the church. I thank God for that. I think I needed New Guinea more than New Guinea needed me!

Later in that second year there, Meg and I returned to Australia for furlough and deputation, medical clearance, the birth of our second child, and I also studied at the University of Queensland to complete my Bachelor of Educational Studies degree which I had commenced externally in New Guinea. Meanwhile at Kwinkia, Seaton and Barbara Arndell joined Kongoe to teach at the Bible School and develop it into the Enga's church's Bible College which eventually had a fully indigenous staff, with Maku Lunga and then Kongoe as principals.

## **Return visit**

Meg and I returned to the Enga area on a holiday visit in 1994, accompanied by our youngest daughter Melinda, then a trainee nurse. A former student at Trinity Theological College, Rev Gideon Tuke, invited me to speak at a United Church conference in the Solomon Islands, so we combined that with our return visit to Papua New Guinea.

We stayed with mission staff at Mt Hagen, Kompiam and Baiyer River, and renewed friendships with many people we had known and taught almost 30 years previously. Pioneer church leaders Sai and Pii still lived, respected and honoured. Revival had swept the area in the seventies, followed by an upsurge of crime in the eighties. Mission stations now needed high protective wire fences and employed night watchmen – a huge contrast to the safety and freedom we had known there. My daughter, a nurse, could not visit village clinics in the hospital jeep, heavily protected with thick mesh wire, in case of rape or robbery. The women had to stay on the mission station for protection.

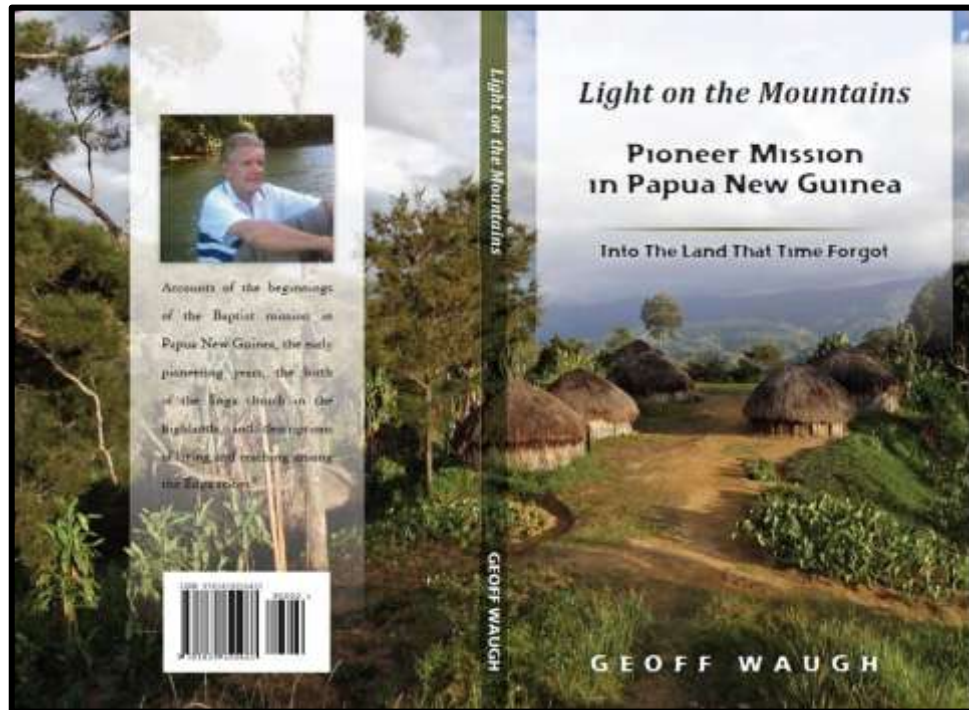
I did take a wild, fast ride by jeep from Baiyer River back to Kwinkia where we had lived, and spoke at some meetings there, prayed with many, and met former students who now, like me, had their own families and held many positions of leadership in the church and community. We rejoiced together in God's grace and goodness, even in the midst of opposition and danger.

I especially remember a moving night at Kompiam where Leneya Bulae from Yangis found me. He had been one of the first students at the Bible School at Kwinkia, one of the three from the remote Yangis area north of Lapalama. His education had been limited, and he was one of the quieter students. Now he served the Lord as a pastor at Yangis and also for six months a year as a roving evangelist, Spirit-led and empowered. Like many others in the revival, he found new anointing and gifting in his life and ministry. He saw many saved, healed and delivered as he prayed for them. He received unusual revelations for people. A Bible reference would come to his mind, even though he did not know what it said. When they read it, they would find it particularly relevant. Leneya only had a Pidgin Bible, no commentaries or concordances.

As we prayed for each other, he felt that Luke 17:5 was for me, "Lord, increase our faith." Now the student taught the teacher! Interestingly, I felt that Judges 6 applied to Lenya, another Gideon destroying local idols and defeating invading forces with small resources under God's direction.

I love to see people living the Scriptures today. That happened with many I have taught

who serve the Lord powerfully in Papua New Guinea, other Pacific islands, the Philippines, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, and Africa. That too became my search as I researched renewal and revival, with a growing family.



*Light on the Mountains*

*Pioneer Mission in Papua New Guinea*

**Into the land that time forgot**

## Chapter 5

### Family: Waughs and Rumours of Waughs



*Geoff & Meg in PNG*



*Geoff & Meg 1968*

Family life enriched me through three generations as son, husband-father, and grandfather.

Family is our core community. This applies to nuclear families (as in my childhood and parenting), single parent families (as when my mother died), blended families (as in my youth), and in extended families (as in my communal lifestyle).

My family ties me with cords of love. They give me joy and fulfilment. God ordained and blesses it. Growing up in a caring, stable family provided me with a strong foundation to see our marriage, our children, and our grandchildren similarly blessed.

I often wondered what it would be like growing up in the family where Jesus was the older brother. We get glimpses as with Jesus' strong sense of mission and divine destiny even at the age of twelve. What would it have been like for his younger brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Jude as well as for the girls in the family? It would challenge everyone and be extremely practical. Maybe that is why the two New Testament books attributed to his brothers James and Jude are so practical, sharp and uncompromising.

Jesus' family, saturated with the Old Testament, followed Jewish traditions. Yet Jesus also fulfilled the law and the prophets in himself, the living Word of God. He challenges our tendency to live by the letter rather than the spirit of the law, and he frees us from bondage to legalism. He still confronts and challenges us by his Spirit in us. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Imagine living with that in your family.

I'm grateful that he is closer and more involved in all our lives than we realise, including our families. Our family constantly experienced his grace together first in Papua New Guinea and then in Queensland.

## **Papua New Guinea**

I went to PNG as a single missionary teacher, and for three fascinating years taught in schools and Bible Schools there, sometimes the only white person in a village such as when I started a school or ran a short-term Bible School in a village away from mission stations. Mostly, however, I lived on mission stations, two of those three years at Lapalama, in the majestic mountains by the Sau River.

Meg came to teach as part of the temporary teacher scheme, one year after I arrived. In the sixties, before independence, the Australian Government paid the salaries of school teachers in PNG to help aid the country's development in education. This enabled missions to develop many more schools. Our temporary teachers came for two years and were not required to learn the local language as was required of all permanent staff. Many teachers, nevertheless, picked up basic Enga phrases.

Our friendship ripened, so in the last six months of 1967, I would finish my Grade 1 class early Friday afternoon, ride my motor bike to Kompiam, and then run the mountain track from Kompiam to Lapalama, normally 5-6 hours hard walking over high ridges and across the Sau River gorge on the swinging vine bridge. I covered that trek in a record 3 hours, a record that still stands. I usually met some young men on the track so would challenge them to a race to their village further along the track. They could leap down the ridges with their sure footed skill and hard bare feet faster than I could, but I often beat them striding up the steep ridges with my long legs. They sang songs around their hut fires about the white man who leaped across the mountains to see his girl at Lapalama.

Village culture, and the mission's indigenous policies, disapproved of a man holding hands with a woman. Married men did not hold their wives hands either, and certainly never hugged



in public. In the village culture of bare skins and minimal covering, such action was regarded as promiscuous. So when Meg and I went walking, such as to a village church on Sundays, we did not touch. Friendly, observant villagers, often our curious school pupils, usually accompanied us.

I did manage to go Western occasionally with hand holding, and even an occasional kiss, but always at night and on those rare occasions when we were alone together. However, even that had its dangers. One time we went for a quiet walk at night along the top of the ridge near the mission station. As it was dark, away from the lights of the houses, I boldly held her hand and enjoyed it. After all, I couldn't have her stumbling in the dark! We paused to embrace. Fortunately I opened my eyes to see smouldering red embers moving toward us low down on the track, and realised it was someone coming along the track with a bundle of dry grass lit to make a light, village style. Some people owned torches, but not many. They used their own bush torches. It was one of my former students. He coughed politely, as you do when you are approaching people in the night so you don't scare them. Meg and I rapidly separated and made room for him to pass as we shared the usual greeting, "I see you are coming!"

Eventually I proposed to Meg, in broad daylight, by the Sau River, down the ridge from Lapalama, before Meg and I flew back to Sydney for furlough. We returned to Australia on 9 December, 1967. I was 30 that day. I met Meg's family and received her parents' blessing on our marriage.

I returned to Australia with Meg, as well as various artefacts – an unusual combination! Young sister Lyn commented, "I remember Geoff coming through customs at the airport with a *giant spear* in his hands - imagine how far you'd get these days."

We had a fulfilling furlough before returning to PNG after we married in May 1968. Mission policy gave staff six months of furlough, now called home assignment, after three years of mission service. Half of that furlough involved speaking at deputation meetings in churches for three months, usually one month each in three different states. Early in 1968 Meg returned to Maths teaching at a girls high school for three months, which added nicely to our limited mission allowance. I visited Queensland for a month of meetings, had meetings in NSW for a month and then a month in Tasmania.

Both of us were 30 when we married at Pennant Hills in Sydney on furlough in 1968. Clergy abounded, including mission representatives, Meg's pastor Col Campbell, and my minister relatives Uncle Frank and brother-in-law John as well as dad and myself. My brother Philip, then seven, joined those ranks later. No lack of ministers there to say grace or lead in prayer!

During our wedding reception we hid our shiny VW bug to protect it from our relatives' pranks. We drove north in that splendid afternoon light to begin a rather extended honeymoon. Eventually we reached Townsville and Magnetic Island in the north where a friend of the mission had given us free use of her holiday home on the island.

We loaded our wedding gifts in crates onto the cargo ship MV Bulolo in which we continued our honeymoon, sailing to Brisbane, Port Moresby and Madang. The ship had only half a dozen passengers, so we dined with the captain on that voyage. Then we flew in a Dakota DC3 from Madang to Mt Hagen in the highlands and loaded our crates onto a mission truck for the scenic drive back into the breath-taking Baiyer Valley. Soon after that we flew again by MAF Cessna back to Lapalama to live together in one of the first mission homes built there, with its thick grass roof, platted bamboo walls, a milled timber floor, and a

separate cook house with its fuel stove out the back. Both our family homes in PNG were made from bush materials, the second one with a platted bamboo floor as well.

Meg taught in the school again, and I taught in another short-term Bible School there in our first year back. Then we established the full time Bible School at Kwinkia in the wide Baiyer Valley with food gardens, workers houses, and a missionaries' home already available. Rob and Win Thompson, brilliant pioneering missionaries, had established the agricultural training centre there, and had built a large bush home which became our second and final home in PNG. It had the usual thick grass roof and woven bamboo walls, and woven bamboo floors in all rooms.

We commenced the Enga Baptist Bible School there in 1969, which later became the Bible College. We had eight students from each of the four districts plus three from the Enga church's remote pioneering mission at Wapi over an eight thousand feet high range north of Lapalama. Those 35 became the founding student body of the full time Bible School, chosen by their own leaders.

Our first child was born there at the Tinsley Hospital at Baiyer River. So I rode my motor bike daily the 10 kilometres from our bush home at the Bible College in the valley to the mission station on the northern slopes of that valley where the hospital, schools and training centres had been established.

As a young family we continued to pioneer at the Bible School. I regularly visited the villages of our students at weekends, and they were pleased to get a ride on our motor-bike back to their village for the weekend. Meg hosted the students in groups for a meal each week, prepared by our house helper who had come with us from Lapalama to Kwinkia.

Later, in 1970, we returned to Sydney for medical clearance and six months of furlough again, including three months of deputation meetings. Meg stayed with her family while I spoke at meetings. Meg was pregnant then with our second child, Jonathan, born in Sydney that November. He added more joy to our lives, and his big sister delighted in helping to look after him from the beginning.

In PNG I had begun studying externally from the University of Queensland for my Bachelor of Educational Studies degree, which required some subjects to be completed internally on campus in Brisbane. So I drove there to see if I could find work, preferably as a pastor, and complete my degree internally. Unfortunately, but perhaps providentially, no Baptist Church there needed a pastor at that time.

While in PNG I participated in inter-denominational conferences, seminars and training groups including Group Life laboratories led by Rev. John Mavor, a Methodist missionary educator in PNG. He suggested I apply to the Methodists in Brisbane, his home base, for Christian Education work. I did. Dr Lewis Born, Director of the Methodist Department of Christian Education (DCE), replied to my letter informing me that he had no openings at that stage, but his letter arrived in Sydney while I drove to Brisbane. So when I phoned him in Brisbane to arrange an appointment, Lew Born asked if I had received his letter, which I had not. He suggested I come in to see him anyway since I was in Brisbane then. The appointment was for the afternoon of the next day in his office.

"Someone up there is looking after you," observed Lew. John Mavor happened to be in Brisbane then and met with Lew Born the morning of my visit. John strongly recommended me to Lew, who adjusted the DCE budget to include me, so I started work there the next day. That day happened to be a DCE staff meeting and training day held at the Methodist Training College and Bible School. That became a 25-year working relationship as a Baptist

minister working with the Methodists and then Uniting Church, and the vocational setting for my family's growth and development.

## **Brisbane**

God unexpectedly open employment for me with the Methodists (surprising me and my relatives), and the DCE bought a fully furnished house for us next door to the their Methodist Training College and Bible School in Kangaroo Point, Brisbane, just a hop across the Brisbane River from the city. The church had wanted to add that house to their lay training college and Bible School many years before, but the owner wanted to live there and did not sell. However, he had died a short while before we arrived and his children were then not only willing to sell the house, but happy to sell it fully furnished to the church at the price the church had originally offered years before. So our young family moved into the expanded college property in our fully furnished, well-kept weatherboard Queenslander home, including having our first TV, washing machine, and complete kitchen.

At that time I did not realize that later on I would be teaching at that college which would then amalgamate with the Theological College with this Baptist minister on staff!

So we moved in with our two children, enjoying our first home not made with bamboo and grass! I soon learned about the amazing array of activities conducted by the DCE. That included running the Bible College (where we lived), regular Christian Education deputation in the churches, camps for children, for youth, for families and for special interest groups, such as for the disabled, held in their half a dozen camp properties scattered along the coast from Cairns to the Gold Coast as well as in the mountains, and safari camps and cruises, multiple ministries for disabled people, and the training of Sunday School teachers and elders both in the city and in regional centres. I plunged into a creative, innovative world of Christian Education that included conferences and staff training run by the national Joint Board of Christian Education based in Melbourne. Before long I added my own creativity to these ministries, including publishing study books on renewal and revival.

Our third child, Melinda, arrived in 1972, strong and happy, a peaceful baby and a delight for us all. While Meg was in hospital for a couple of weeks, I enjoyed caring for our other two lively and helpful children. Then Meg had three children under three to manage, with some help from me when I was around.

By the time I completed my university studies, I was fully involved in DCE ministry, and leading innovations in renewal and revival, which both captured my interest and provided an ever-expanding inter-denominational ministry. Boldly, and perhaps blindly, I led an ecumenical renewal meeting in the Wesley Church right in the heart of the city on Tuesday nights of our second year there. I invited renewal speakers from every denomination including Catholics, Protestants and Pentecostals.

PNG had freed me from many of my Western traditions, and now the DCE freed me even more. I found myself exploring new dimensions of interdenominational ministry in renewal and revival which have shaped my life and ministry ever since

Our small children regularly attended camps and conferences with us, finding friends among the children of our friends. We had moved from working with a brown skinned community in PNG to an active white skinned community in this land of cars, telephones and electricity. Much of my work was similar, still teaching and training leaders and interacting with some families, but our environment and lifestyle had changed dramatically from PNG

days.

We enjoyed visits from our relatives, all living interstate, and we visited them at Christmas and for special occasions, especially weddings. My youngest sister Daphne came to stay with us for a while and then worked in the domestic staff at the college on the same property. Eventually she married one of the young men living there, and like many in my family they are now delighted parents and grandparents. The tribe multiplies!

## **Toowoomba**

After our two years in Brisbane, we moved to Toowoomba, 200 kilometres west in the mountain ranges. The DCE adopted a decentralised policy of locating Christian Education staff in various regions of the vast state, usually based in regional towns. At first they called us District Field Officers (DFOs), sometimes nicknamed UFOs because we drove so far and so fast covering the whole state. Later they renamed our work as Regional Education Officers (REOs). So we developed our own shorthand jargon, such as the DFOs became REOs of the DCE including the MTC&BS (Methodist Training College and Bible School).

We lived in Toowoomba for four years, 1973-1976, again renting a house bought by the DCE, this time a lovely brick home. Our two eldest children attended preschool and started school there. We lived just two blocks from an innovative Open Area primary school, and I knew the principal. He involved me in teaching Religious Education there, in joining the Australian College of Education for professional development, and in teaching Religious Education courses at the College of Advanced Education (now the University of Southern Queensland).

## **Life Line and Renewal**

Christian Education ministries kept us on the cutting edge of church life. My work included the usual range of Christian Education teaching and training and also for a year being the inaugural director of Life Line in Toowoomba until it could sustain a full time director.

Life Line challenged us all. Begun by Dr Alan Walker in Sydney, it enables anyone, anywhere to phone in for immediate telephone help or counselling.

I led a weekly renewal service on Tuesday nights at Raff Street Methodist Church for a few years. Being the only denominational renewal meeting in Toowoomba at that time, it was always inter-denominational, catering for people from many churches who appreciated its open, spontaneous style, seeking to be Spirit-led in worship, teaching and personal prayers for people. I also led a leaders' group in our home each Thursday night, another significant innovation for us. Home groups are common now, but not then. Many churches still had a traditional mid-week Bible Study meeting in the church. Some of our friends brought their children to our house where they read and then slept while we met together. Others arranged for baby sitters. Those children, including ours, now have their own children, and so the wheel goes round.

## **Corinda, Brisbane**

In 1977 my work took me back to Brisbane to teach at the Methodist lay training college, then called Alcorn College, named after Methodist pioneers there in Christian Education. Our

friends, Don and Kay Fox, like all the DCE staff, pioneered innovations. They had bought a grand old Queenslander home in Corinda, raised it higher to add rooms and a garage underneath, and closed in some of the verandas to make extra rooms. The seventies saw a global spread of renewal communities, and they invited other young people to live with them in a Christian community and discipling environment as part of their extended family.

We inherited that just at the time at Don and Kay and their three young children moved to America to work first with Teen Challenge and then with other youth programs. At first Meg was not sure that she wanted to live in such an extended family. Having three young children, and teaching part time was challenge enough. But some months before, as Meg drove between Brisbane and Toowoomba after attending a meeting in Brisbane where Arthur Blessit spoke (another radical innovator), she found herself asking God about it, with eyes wide open as she drove, and also eyes wide open to the big challenges of community living.

Unlike our logical and down-to-earth Meg, she asked God for a confirming sign, such as a falling star. She had hardly finished suggesting that to God, when a large falling star flashed across the night sky. Then Meg's logic kicked in and she thought that could have just been a coincidence. So she suggested to God that a second falling star would be more convincing. Sure enough, there was another one a little later. Rather like Abraham bargaining with God, she kind of prayed that she would be really convinced if she saw a third one! She did. As far as I know, that was the only time in her life she ever bargained with God that way.

### **Communal lifestyle**

We moved to Corinda back in Brisbane in 1977. Two others already lived in the home. They had been there with Don and Kay. It was a little like the upstairs-downstairs of England! Our family lived upstairs, and Diane and Neil had rooms downstairs (the first of two Dianes and two Neils who lived with us). We all ate together for dinner each night, unless someone was working late. Breakfast, even with our children, became staggered as people rose and left at different times.

Our new home stood conveniently between the nearby train station with shops and the primary school over the road. Our children just walked across the road to attend school. Like their parents before them, the older two had to adjust to starting in a new school, finding new friends, and even in primary school having to adapt to new ways of teaching, shifting from an open classroom school in Toowoomba to traditional classes in rows of desks in Corinda. They found that hard, and we had a few tearful days at the beginning. Eventually they found friends, many of their friends being in the same class with them right through primary and high school in Corinda.

Don and Kay kindly suggested that our rent be the mortgage payments. They thought and lived Kingdom, not commerce. That helped us enormously. Our boarders contributed to household costs as well. Eventually we saved enough to obtain a bank loan to buy that house at the market rate. And our little community grew, not with more of our own children, but with more boarders. At its peak when we had a dozen living there, seven adults in addition to our family of five, Paul and Lyndall brought home their first baby, Nathan. That was a crowded time. We had offered to help some people who needed accommodation, so the numbers had grown without us planning on it.

Living in community has many challenges! All the adults in our household met together

one night each week to discuss our community household affairs, and pray together. We needed a lot of grace and tolerance!

Our household community remained diverse. For example, we attended different churches, mostly Uniting, but also Anglican and others. Some of us attended Inala Uniting Church on Sunday mornings where the minister, Evan Jones, challenged us with his sharp, short and insightful messages. Many of us attended the Wesley Church at Kangaroo Point where I helped lead along with Wal Gregory, their part-time minister, and Col Warren, the principal of Alcorn College where I taught.

Both Inala and Kangaroo Point churches expressed the dynamic of renewal in different ways. Inala incorporated renewal teaching and ministry into traditional services, enlivened with the Spirit's presence. Wesley's morning services remained traditional with the pipe organ and hymnbook, whereas the evening services were charismatic with about an hour of renewal worship involving many instruments followed by preaching and personal prayers for the steadily growing congregation.

Many young people from Wesley church chose to live in a steadily growing number of community houses associated with that congregation. Each week I met with the leaders of those community houses. Those leaders also hosted Wednesday night cell groups. Our leaders' group usually met at 6 a.m. on Wednesdays for breakfast, discussion and prayer. That followed their community household gatherings on Tuesday nights and preceded the Wednesday cell group. So we all kept well informed about developments. These proved to be useful discipling innovations.

We also led a cell group in our home, mainly for older people, most from Wesley's evening congregation. We came from many different denominational backgrounds but we all had found renewed life in the Spirit. The 80-100 youth gathering in cell groups from Wesley sang with guitars, whereas our group sang with our piano, played by Hilary Mackerras. Like all the other renewal cell groups we shared our thoughts and discoveries together and usually prayed for one another in smaller clusters.

### **Alcorn College and Trinity Theological College**

Eventually our cell group commenced the Renewal Fellowship meeting on Friday nights at Trinity Theological College where I was teaching after Alcorn College merged with Trinity Theological College, and I found myself on the staff of the Uniting Church theological college! Sounds like God's humour, especially with my differing views on baptism, ordination, and even renewal. However, I'm grateful for those visionaries in the Uniting Church who encouraged uniting beyond doctrinal differences.

During one interesting year, when the Bible College at the Garden City Christian Church, an AOG church, began teaching government accredited courses, I was able to help their students also. Academic rules prevented me from teaching accredited courses off campus, so the Garden City students had to come over by bus for my classes! We had an interesting mix of Uniting, Anglican, Catholic and Pentecostal students all studying and ministering in class together!

As part of my continuing education I worked my way through post-graduate studies with Fuller Theological Seminary in Los Angeles, America, mostly by distance education until I completed their Doctor of Missiology degree. Our family had fun on a few trips to America while I was involved in that study.

Eventually in the late eighties with our teenagers doing very well in high school and going on to university, we sold our aging Queenslander and moved into a low maintenance brick home, also in Corinda. Andrew, our son's friend from university, joined us for two years there, returning to his parents' home and church in the country on weekends. Later Andrew lived in Yangon, Myanmar/Burma to help care for orphans and all my adult children and their families have visited him there.

### **Christian Outreach Centre and Christian Heritage College**

Eventually, after 25 years working with the Methodist and Uniting church, my final contract there expired in 1994. Then the principal of the Bible College at Christian Outreach Centre offered me a job as a consultant to prepare their Bachelor of Ministry submission for the Queensland government. So I found myself working in a lively Pentecostal environment. The following year I began teaching at their Bible College. It is also part of Christian Heritage College, which confers degrees and diplomas in Education, Social Sciences, Business and Ministry, rather unique for Pentecostals who for a century usually regarded academic study suspiciously. We aimed to show it can be, and should be, powerful. I also continued leading the weekly ecumenical Renewal Fellowship at the Trinity College chapel in the Uniting Church centre, but moved to my new job, still teaching.

Those years were a surprising mix of renewal and revival ministries and mission in Brisbane, in visiting many churches in Australia, and in many teams on short-term missions internationally as described later in this book.

While teaching at the School of Ministries at Christian Heritage College I continued to lead the ecumenical Renewal Fellowship in the chapel at Trinity Theological College in the Uniting Church headquarters in Brisbane. People from most denominations gathered there to worship and pray together. Many of them travelled with me on renewal and revival mission trips to many different countries.

Students and friends from Christian Heritage College also joined me on various short-term missions, so we were not only studying about ministry and mission but doing it. Some of the overseas students in both Trinity College and Christian Heritage College invited me to come to their home countries to teach and lead revival meetings.

Meg and I also moved. During and after their university studies our teenagers began experimenting with living away from home. They became actively involved in Christian groups at university, including holding leadership positions. Later on they completed further degrees in their chosen fields of teaching, information technology and community nursing and public health. Meg completed further studies in school counselling while teaching and then changed from classroom teaching at St Aidan's Girls High School to becoming the school counsellor there.

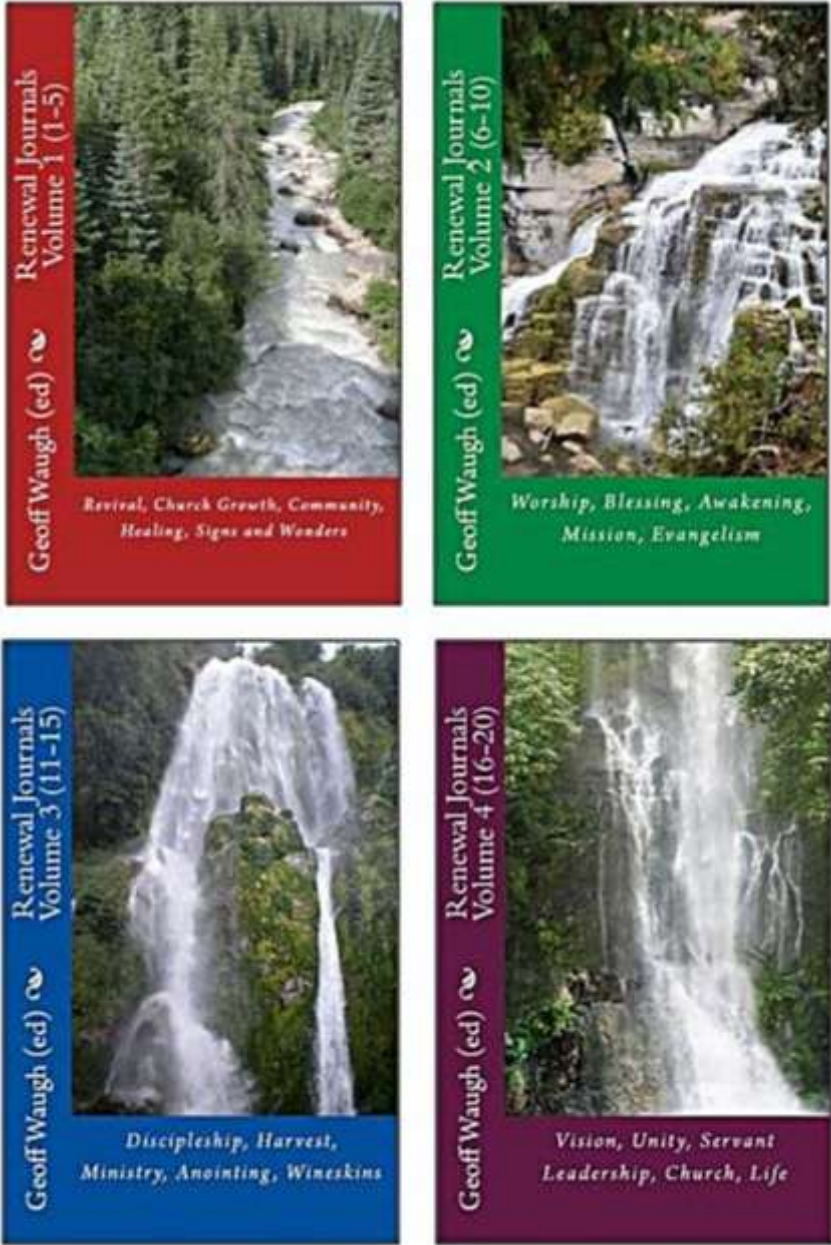
All three children married and we now enjoy seeing our eight grandchildren growing into wonderful young people. We all admire their achievements at school and university and in regional and national sporting teams.

Jemimah, our eldest grandchild, studying medicine, married a keen Christian leader Joshua, and is involved with him in youth groups, campus ministries and mission, as are other grandchildren.

After Meg died from ovarian cancer in 2002, in spite of our prayers, we pooled resources with Jonathan and Melinda's families and lived together in our home designed and mostly

built by Jonathan with Melinda's husband Reuben's help, and the women busy with planning and buying. So I appreciate living in the granny flat, watching grandchildren grow, being well cared for in retirement, and able to continue occasional short-term mission ventures.

My retirement hobby developed into editing and writing books like this, and maintaining the Renewal Journal blogs and publications as on my website, [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) .



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## Chapter 6

### Search and Research: begin with A B C



*Israel and publications:* Jerusalem scenes, Romulo blowing shofar on the Mount of Olives, Jonathan with donkey in old city, early publications

My reading began with A B C books and story books of Jesus. I continue to read and write about him. Have you noticed the sheer volume of books about Jesus and his mission? I have hundreds of them, so my children inherit a huge library!

I've read hundreds, and skimmed thousands of books about Jesus and his mission. These include many versions of the Bible, especially the New Testament, and a life time of reading devotional and study books, children's and youth materials, Christian Education resources, biographies and mission accounts and volumes on missiology. Missiology is not the study of what you *miss* in life. It's the study of mission, and yes, we do *miss* a lot of what Jesus did and wants!

Jesus is our mission. He gave his life for us, and gives his life to us. He himself is our mission: to know him and to make him known – not merely to know *about* him or just help others know *about* him.

The apostle John recorded Jesus' amazing claims about himself. These declarations use the emphatic "I myself am" or "I alone am" (*ego eimi*). The Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) uses that emphatic form for God's declarations about himself, such as "I am who I am" which Jesus echoes in many claims including "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58 and 4:26; 8:24; 13:19). Similarly, Jesus used that same emphatic form in these astounding claims:

"I am the bread of life" (John 6:35)

"I am the living bread" (John 6:51)

"I am the light of the world" (John 8:12)

"I am the door" (John 10:9)

"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11)

"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25)

"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6)

"I am the true vine" (John 15:1)

"I am the first and the last" (Revelation 1:17)

"I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end" (Revelation 1:8; 21:6)

C S Lewis sharply reminds us that Jesus was not just a great teacher. He did not leave that option open for us. He is either Lord, or liar, or lunatic. "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 5:11) became the first and shortest creed of Christians.

Knowing him, and making him known, became my lifelong search and research. I continued that search through constant research about Jesus and his mission. Then I began publishing a few of my findings.

A visit to Israel helped. It exploded that search into living research.

## **Israel**

My living research included our family's visit to Israel in December-January, 1981-82, almost 30 years ago. We saved enough to cover our fares when our children travelled half-fare at 12, 11 and 9, so we organised our own economical visit, staying in church hospices (hostels) with a few friends from Brisbane.

We explored the Holy Land from the Golan heights in the north to the Sinai desert in the south, and visited Egypt as well. This adventure brought the Bible alive for me in new ways. We discovered so many sights, sounds and smells as well as touching and tasting its unique variety.

This is the land of Jesus. He laboured in the hills around Nazareth. He often walked the 100 kilometres from Galilee to Jerusalem. Devout Jews attended the three main feasts in Jerusalem each year: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. He later ministered with his followers in and beyond the towns and villages of the hills around Galilee. He traversed the land proclaiming and demonstrating the good news of God's Kingdom.

Some people from Wesley Church joined us, including Diane and Paul from our community house. We stayed in the convenient Anglican hospice in the old city of Jerusalem as well as in the impressive Church of Scotland hospice at Tiberius on Lake Galilee. What an adventure! Together we explored Jerusalem, Bethlehem (on Christmas eve for carols and Christmas day to explore), Masada, the Dead Sea, Eilat on the Red Sea, the Sinai desert, the wide Jordan valley, Tiberius and Galilee including Capernaum. We saw the locations of so many Bible events we knew about.

While Meg and Diane visited England for a week that January, I toured with the children and some of our group by bus to Egypt. We climbed into the Great Pyramid visiting the hot, stuffy burial chamber inside, had camel rides at the Sphinx, visited the Cairo museum and zoo, and took a ride on the Nile in an ancient style of boat. We crossed the Suez Canal twice in our journey across the desert, but I think the children slept through most of that from exhaustion!

I wrote the following impressions in a circular letter on our return.

## **FAMILY VISIT TO ISRAEL**

Hans Bouma writes free verse - personal and powerful. Here's a sample opposite a photograph of Galilee (*An Eye on Israel*, p. 68)

how in his element  
he was here  
at the shore of the lake

talking preaching  
healing liberating  
distributing bread and fish

a brother  
one of us  
man among men  
person among persons

it was the death of him  
anybody who lives like that  
needs to be eliminated

he came back ...

That's it. Meg found that book in a shop in Eilat on the Red Sea gulf, just like we found many treasures, thoughts, souvenirs, fellow Australians, pilgrims, tourists Christians, and

scenic wonders from the fertile ranges of Dan in the north to the dry desert around Beersheba in the south; from the northern snow peaks of Mt Hermon to the southern gaunt crags of the Sinai.

How do you compress a month of vivid impressions into a few pages; over 4,000 years of history into one letter? You can't. Others have written books, or journals. I'll jot down some notes. These notes are a kind of travelogue, diary, family chronicle, impressions, highlights, devotional reflections, biblical discoveries, and personal pilgrimage all rolled into one jumble.

Professor E M Blaiklock noted, "The specious pilgrims, devotees or charlatans, who contrived a living across Europe on their way to the 'Sainte Terre', put the word 'saunterer' into the vocabulary of the West. By air, road and sea the pilgrims still arrive, perhaps with packs on back and seeking adventure or service in this kibbutz or that; with projects of study in more than one notable university; to dig for a season in yet more ruin tells; or perhaps in eager parties, pastored, tutored, guided and comfortably lodged at night" (*Eight Days in Israel*, p. 7)

The two books I've quoted are our favourites. Both have magnificent photos in colour and clear, concise text.

## IMPRESSIONS

**First view** from the plane: the long straight coastline. Tel Aviv sprawling around Jaffa (old Joppa), so many stone and cream brick houses, flat roofs, sealed roads spreading out across fertile coastal plains; and landing over cultivated fields and orange groves.

**Israeli soldiers** in battle green - gun strung from shoulder strap, mostly young. National service is compulsory for all at 18 for three years. Alert. Few signs of active war; just a sense of immediate readiness to act - quickly. Peaceful atmosphere. Friendly. Quick action if needed. On guard.

**Bargaining** began on stepping outside the terminal; cab drivers competing for a fare to Jerusalem or anywhere. We arrived late Saturday afternoon and all of us, five Waughs plus three friends piled into one 7-seater sherut (taxi) for the breath-taking 50 kilometre drive south east to Jerusalem.

**Road signs** leapt from the Bible onto huge notice boards; we followed those on the four lane main highway to the hills, to Jerusalem. Evening came. A big city set on hills, lit by a thousand lights, like any city, yet unique. Very hilly. Weaving through crowded modern streets in West Jerusalem to our hospice (hostel) inside the walls of the Old City just near the Jaffa Gate. Those walls! History in stone.

**Jerusalem.** Now tumbling impressions, so fast, old and new together, scores of languages, tourists, people milling about in the Old City, arriving Saturday evening at the end of the Sabbath, Christians sharing travel talk at the hospice, our family in a 16-bed dormitory used as a family room in winter. Cool and crisp. Woollens needed each night and many days in the hills.

**First night in Israel**, in Jerusalem. Travel weary but too wide awake to sleep yet. So with the family bedded down I walked-ran-sauntered around the Old City walls; about 2 kilometres, none flat. All our impressions are personal, different, vivid. As I circled flood-lit city walls at night I was swamped by history I'd read, studied, taught, preached, heard all my life. The impact of that still remains, but is also too big. Just one circuit of the walls and

you have encircled events like Abraham on Mt Moriah (probably), David, Solomon - that Temple Mount still there, still walled, still standing high over David's Zion on the ridge to the south of it, the deep Kidron Valley and sentinel Mount of Olives immediately east, and Calvary and a silent tomb somewhere close by to the west - the kings, prophets and priests of Judah, Rehoboam's stupidity, Josiah's reforms, Zedekiah's surrender to yet another army, Isaiah, Jeremiah, then Ezra and Nehemiah (those walls again), on past Greek and Roman invasion to the central drama of the universe – Jesus. You can't absorb it all. It's too big.

And 2,000 years of history is written there since then. That's more obvious. Turk, Muslim, Crusader, Arab, Jew. Israel today. So small. 70 kilometres wide; 200 kilometres long (i.e. Dan to Beersheba).

## SUNDAY

Here are a few impressions from our first full day there.

7.30, breakfast - bacon and eggs (pork in Jerusalem!).

8.00, Anglican service and communion inside the Old City just beside our Anglican hospice (English service, English Prayer Book, English hymns – home away from home).

9.30, a quick walk to the Garden Tomb for an evangelical service there - they were singing "Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings" as we came in. The organist played *He is Lord* and *How Great Thou Art* at the end of the service and we wandered in that beautiful place, the favourite spot in Jerusalem for most of our group and our family; quiet, beautiful, easy to reflect or meditate or just think or pray. Holding the tiny black speck of a mustard seed from a bush there.

10.30, sauntering into the Old City again; bazaars; Arab urgings to buy souvenirs wares, post cards, gifts; bargaining; people milling everywhere in narrow streets; Old city streets so narrow no vehicle can come in so donkeys still carry loads there; on to the Temple Mount, spacious, dominated by the Dome of the Rock mosque, clear views of the Mount of Olives directly opposite; on by an underground path beneath old, old arches beside the Temple Mount (once bridges between the temple area and the western part of the old city) to the Western Wall (once called the Wailing Wall) of the Temple - the only remains of the buildings there from Jesus' day - the Jews' most holy site, now with a huge cleared and paved area beside it, their substitute for their temple; eating pomegranate - sweet but messy; one main English language paper *The Jerusalem Post* follows Israel's tradition by not printing the name of God, prints G-d instead. All that before lunch!

Back to the hospice for lunch, then we walked again exploring the southern side of the Old City including the continuing excavations at the Southern Wall of the temple where buildings long buried since Bible days are partially uncovered and restored; then in late afternoon some of us returned for sunset at the Western Wall and the first day of the Festival of Lights (see John 10:22 - It was winter, and the Festival of the Dedication of the Temple was being celebrated in Jerusalem). Still is. Every day, beginning at sunset, the Jews light an oil lamp for 8 days commemorating their deliverance from the Syrian Greeks in the days of the Maccabbean revolt against Greek rule. Their story is that a tiny amount of olive oil lasted miraculously for 8 days when they reclaimed and restored the desecrated temple and lit the 7-branch candle-stick (menorah). By the end of the 8 days they had been able to produce more oil from olive trees. Our first week was in Jerusalem, so we saw the lamps being lit and were there when all 8 were alight on the 8th day - the following Sunday evening.

After supper (English name for dinner) we piled into Christ Church for the Anglican and interdenominational carol service, for Christmas came that week too.

I was able to fit in a visit to the Jerusalem Baptist evening service after that (arriving late but glad I found it). As we prayed there at their charismatic service, a strong aroma of burning filled the room, noticed by everyone. [Years later, I noticed that same fire smell in other prayer times in other countries.] On my walk back to the hospice I made another circuit of those Old City's ancient walls, now flood lit.

That was just one day! So many were like that.

## **REFLECTIONS**

Here are a few memories. Christmas Eve at the Shepherds' Field opposite Bethlehem only 15 kilometres south of Jerusalem's Old City where we joined bus loads of tourists for a carol service as we sat on the ground around and above caves possibly used as shelters by shepherds; a fantastic American choir (one of many visiting Israel for Christmas) singing unaccompanied songs including "Down from his glory, ever living story, my Lord and Saviour came, and Jesus was his name. Born in a manger, to his own a stranger... O how I love him" and finishing with the Hallelujah Chorus. Singing carols on the bus back to Jerusalem.

A Christmas Day visit to Bethlehem on a local bus; wandering around 'David's wells' there - three ancient wells in a monastery garden. Too many churches crowding sacred sites! Too much religious paraphernalia. You get more of the feel of original biblical places if you stay clear of the religious monuments in churches: altars, icons, incense, and religious rituals.

A full day's bus trip to the Dead Sea - from Jerusalem via the Mount of Olives and Bethany down to the Jordan Valley near Jericho, on to the Dead Sea past Qumran (Dead Sea scrolls area) and En Gedi (David's hideout with fresh water springs) to Masada - stark mountain fortress where the last of the Jews held out against the Romans following the 70 A.D. war when Jerusalem was destroyed. A cable car now lifts you quickly there to wander in the remains of Herod's palace and garrison. The huge stone and dirt ramp still remains, built by slaves under Roman rule used to reach the top after a four-year siege. Those Jews committed mass suicide rather than surrender; and that stands for Israel like Anzac does for Australia. Soldiers now vow: Masada shall not fall again.

Down for a swim in the Dead Sea, some getting salt in eyes and mouth and regretting the savage sting. The road back was closed for an hour or so by Israeli soldiers who had found footprints along the shore, so stopped all movement till it was checked out - for fear of terrorists from Jordan. It proved to be tourists - maybe friends of ours who camped on the beach that previous night! The women and children returned by taxi on a longer inland route through Hebron and Bethlehem. I returned by bus with David Baker (in our group) after the road was opened again. We beat the taxi home as it turned out. The bus driver was in a hurry, being late.

A long bus trip from Jerusalem past the Dead Sea - to Eilat on the Red Sea (old Akkaba now new, and a large Jordanian sea port just over the border from Eilat). We stayed in a caravan park near the beach, with one leisurely day at the beach - a pleasant change from exploring and walking every day. Then we took a guided tour for two days into Sinai and stayed at St Catherine's monastery there near one of the presumed (but unlikely) sites of Horeb, Sinai. That involved long desert bus rides, a 4am start in the dark to climb 'Mt Sinai'

and watch the sun rise from the top for some of us, a wander through the old monastery dating back to the 6th century A.D. It was built there because of a bush in the valley. It's the only bush of that kind in the Sinai ranges, so someone thought it may have been the burning bush - a rather unlikely story. It still grows! The monastery is built around it. Actually it's more like a creeping vine and weeping willow combination. Anyway, there's lots of history there - monks and pilgrims for centuries. No one knows where the real Horeb is; maybe around there, but more likely across the Red Sea in Midian (Jethro's area) in Arabia!

Back to Eilat and an early start on New Year's Day to travel by bus to Tel Aviv on the coast, change buses there and head north to Galilee via the coast, across the Plain of Sharon and the Valley of Jezreel, past Megiddo south of the Galilee hills where Nazareth strides the hill tops, on to Tiberias on the south-west of Galilee lake.

Galilee is beautiful. Nestled 200 metres (700 feet) below sea level, surrounded by rolling hills and the Mt Hermon ranges to the north where the Jordan head waters form in the snows and tumble from 8,000 feet above sea level to below sea level in about 40 kilometres. 'Jordan' means 'descender' and it does - all the way from the northern ranges steeply down to Galilee and down the wide Jordan Valley rift to the Dead Sea 400 metres (1400 feet) below sea level, the lowest place on earth.

Of course we saw the sights around the Sea of Galilee too - ruins of Capernaum, lakeside historical places like Magdala and Bethsaida, even a drive right around the lake on our first afternoon there in the car of one of the guests at the hospice, a 50 kilometre trip. The Church of Scotland hospice provided the most beautiful setting we stayed in, right by the lake in an old Turkish government centre, now a church hostel. We swam in the hot springs there. It was even warm enough one day later on for me to dive into the lake - clear and bracing. I returned there while Meg visited her sister in London and took the children on a motor boat ride to Capernaum.

## **EGYPT**

The Egypt trip involved two long days of getting there by bus and returning by bus across the Sinai desert coastal road (to Gaza, to the Suez and then to Cairo) with waits at the Israel-Egypt border in the desert of 3 to 5 hours! On the trip south we left Jerusalem at 8am after a quick breakfast, then spent all afternoon at the border clearing passports and baggage along with some hundreds of other bus travellers - all arriving around the same time. We changed to an Egyptian bus and guide, scored a flat tyre so returned to the border for another hour and a half while that was fixed. So we crossed the Suez on a passenger barge at night and another tourist bus took us to Cairo for dinner at 11.30 p.m.!

Next day was full of guided activity. A visit to Memphis - the capital in Joseph and Moses' day, bargaining again, and the visits to tombs and pyramid and Sphinx, including camel rides and the tourist hike into the hot and stuffy burial chamber in the middle of the Great Pyramid.

The second day included a visit to the Cairo museum with the displays of Tutenkahmen the boy king, now famous because his tomb was the only one recently discovered which had not been plundered by grave robbers over the centuries. So the burial artefacts are now on view - layers of gold and hundreds of symbolic figures. We also visited the bazaar, then saw an old church said to be where Mary and Joseph took Jesus to stay in a cave for a while (!) and a nearby synagogue dating centuries back on the site of an earlier one belonging to Jews

in Egypt in Bible times, where it's assumed Joseph took Mary and Jesus. At night we returned to the pyramids and Sphinx for a sound and light show, seeing them lit by coloured lights while seeing the story of 5,000 years of history dramatically recalled.

Our free day in Cairo gave us time for a ride on the Nile River in a sail boat modelled on ancient ones, and a visit to the Cairo zoo, followed by a long walk back to the hotel and an early night ready for an early start next morning. We left Cairo about 4,30am after a quick breakfast, retraced our way to the Suez canal, but this time crossed in the bus on a vehicle ferry, after we had watched a few ships sail south through the sand, and sat around at the border for some hours then slumped into our Israeli bus to doze most of the way back to Jerusalem, arriving there about 7 p.m.

I hired a car so we could catch up on scattered places from Eilat and the Dead Sea, Jericho, the Jordan Valley rift, return to Galilee, over the hills to Nazareth and nearby Cana, past Mt Carmel to Haifa on the coast. A sherut (taxi) driver took us on the return trip down through the central ranges along the Jezreel Valley into old Samaria, a stop at Jacob's Well, through the hills and valleys heading into the Judean hills and back to Jerusalem for our final days together in Israel. Shalom

Those were my 1982 impressions, and they remain vivid!

So do other impressions. My perspectives shifted from pretty story book pictures to living, current ones.

**Jerusalem.** Everything jams together in the old city of Jerusalem. I walked around it all each night in an hour or so. Jesus, while bound, walked quickly from Gethsemane to Caiaphas' house, to temple prison, to Pilate's residence, to Herod's palace, to Pilate again, to the fortress barracks for flogging, to Calvary (not a hill, but Golgotha, the place of a skull on the main road just outside the city wall, as was Roman custom to terrorise conquered subjects), all by 9am one fateful morning.

**Bethlehem.** No room in the what? Mary and Joseph weren't trying to check into an inn, because they stayed with relatives. Luke has a different word for inn (*pandeion*), which he uses in the Good Samaritan story. The word in the Christmas story (*kataluma*) is the word used for the room in which Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples — the guest room of a house. The guest room in Bethlehem was already full, so they had to use the crowded, smelly stable and the feeding box for a crib.

**Galilee.** Jesus had to live outdoors, forced by hot, desperate rabble, pushing and shoving to touch him because all who touched him were healed (Matthew 14:36, Mark 6:56). No pristine, bleached white robes for him! Just dust, and noise, and thousands of sweaty hands, with barely any space or time to eat.

Bible picture books and Christmas or Easter cards look so pretty. They're like serene, stained glass fiction, compared to the dirty, smelly reality. This reality no children's book can depict, especially the bruised and bloodied victims gasping in excruciating pain on ghastly crosses along the main road while their executioners grabbed the victim's clothes for themselves or gambled for them.

My searching and researching about Jesus led me to some interesting and often surprising study. The study stretched me, usually more than I wanted to be stretched, often required for teaching or ministry. My years of formal study covered three main areas: *education, ministry and mission.*



## Education

I passed everything in High School except French (that was all Greek to me), but not brilliantly. Most of it didn't grab me, except Religious Education, then not a formal subject. I gained a government Teachers College scholarship so enjoyed two years of practical study for my Teachers College Certificate.

I could apply my studies immediately, especially as a Sunday School teacher. At 17 I was passing on my new teaching discoveries to other Sunday School teachers in our weekly training class for them! It was not quite the blind leading the blind, because I had been teaching Sunday School since early High School. It did help me apply my college work immediately, and creatively.

I applied that study to my primary school teaching in Australia and in PNG with children, youth and adults. I loved the cross-cultural experience, especially teaching. I think I learned more than I taught as we learned together about our cultures and Christian living.

While involved in cross-cultural teaching I wanted to study mission – called missiology. Fuller Seminary pioneered graduate studies in World Mission, but I needed a bachelor level degree to enrol. So I enrolled in the Bachelor of Educational Studies from the University of Queensland (UQ) in Brisbane. I studied much of it externally in PNG, often by kerosene lamp in our grass roofed bamboo houses there. Many of my books acquired squashed or pressed bugs, attracted to the kerosene lamp after the generator 'died' each night about 10 pm.

The external students' notes and study materials from UQ impressed me. So much so that I carted them around for years until we moved into a small unit and needed to downsize everything. Then reluctantly I tossed them out, after hoarding them in cartons for twenty years! However I kept my own essays, and can still surprise myself when I occasionally examine them. Lecturer's remarks usually affirmed and encouraged me (as lecturers should!), especially the fellow who used single, double or triple ticks beside good ideas or points. I appreciated those triple ticks! And I've used that shorthand in my own marking ever since. Easier and quicker than gold star stickers!

Studying for the B.Ed.St. at UQ eventually took me to Brisbane to complete the degree internally, and that's where my vocation 'diverted' into ecumenical renewal. Chicken and egg! Did mission lead me to education studies, or did education studies lead me to unexpected mission. Both, I think.

A lot of education study applies to all of life, not just teaching. For example, I found that studying the aims or objectives of education helped me in ministry and mission as well. Education aims to help us grow in these many ways (adapted here from my research – taxonomies by Krathwohl, Waugh and Bloom!):

Affective ways (attitudes, emotions, feelings, values, commitments),

Behavioural ways (skills, abilities, achievements, psycho-motor actions) and

Cognitive ways (knowledge, thinking, understanding).

I like the ABC terminology (Affective, Behavioural, Cognitive) because it's easy to remember. Previously, I thought mainly about the cognitive goals, e.g. our doctrines. However, our best teaching and learning often comes through involvement and example, as in apprenticeship, or learning to talk, use languages, make a cake, drive a car, or live a Christian lifestyle by loving and serving one another.

We learn in all these ways, in knowledge, as well as attitudes and skills, progressing

through ascending levels. Our commitments show up in the highest levels of these areas of development:

**Affective (attitudes):** progression of learning through

Receiving – you hear, or pay attention, perhaps passively.

Responding – you participate, react, or get involved.

Valuing – you give significance or meaning to it.

Organising – you incorporate it into your thinking or living.

Characterising – you integrate it into your life, your character.

**Behavioural (skills):** progression of learning through

Awareness – you know it can be done, or learned.

Attempting – you try it with varying ability, gradually improving

Achieving – you master it, with increasing skill.

Applying – you use it in a range of situations.

Adapting – you relate it effectively to other possibilities.

**Cognitive (knowledge):** progression of learning through

Knowledge – you remember or recall it.

Comprehension – you understand it.

Application – you use it in various ways.

Analysis – you identify elements and principles of it.

Synthesis – you compile it by combining elements in patterns.

Evaluation – you assess it and make judgments about it.

Creativity – you use it to develop something new.

Notice how Jesus powerfully taught, demonstrated and required change or growth in attitudes and behaviour, not just knowledge. His powerful teaching demonstrated Kingdom attitudes and action: loving the outcasts, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, freeing the oppressed, confronting the proud, washing the feet of arguing disciples!

I applied those educational principles to my classes. Together we learned to minister to one another more effectively. The mature insights, prayers and prophetic words of my Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Church students at Trinity Theological College impressed me, and the zeal of my students at Christian Heritage College stretched me.

One student we prayed for at Christian Heritage College one morning in class went to her doctor that same day for a final check before having a growth removed from her womb. Her doctor could find no trace of the growth, checking with three ultrasound machines, so cancelled the scheduled operation.

“My class at college laid hands on me and prayed for me,” she explained to her doctor. “I believe God healed me, and that’s why you can’t find the growth any more.”

“I don’t know if God healed you,” he responded. “But I do know that you don’t need an operation.”

## Ministry

We all minister. Our ministry expresses Jesus’ ministry in and through us. None of us, of course, shine with the brilliance Jesus did. But we too are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). That light still shines in the darkness.

Jesus’ ministry becomes our ministry. He reconciles us to God and gives us this ministry of reconciliation. “As the Father has sent me, so send I you” (John 20:21).

Ministry is not only full-time pastoral ministry. I did that for one year, but my main ministry was teaching, not as a full-time pastor. Every one of us can help others in some way. Service professions are an obvious way, but we all work with people and can help them in some way. Ministry, at heart, is serving.

My formal studies in ministry, four years at Theological College, covered the usual range of biblical, theological, and practical ministry subjects, including four years of New Testament Greek. By the end of the first year we were reading 1 John in Greek, or trying to. Fortunately I memorised (in KJV of course) the passages we had to translate in exams so found that easy, although I did need to modernise the translating. The other way around, English to Greek, was tough! My skills in translating into Greek just enabled a Pass.

I usually enjoyed writing essays! Some topics grabbed me, and then came the work of capturing the main ideas in essay form, concise but comprehensive. I liked applying my study to ministry. One essay that I loved researching and applying was, "Write a Preface to the Book of Acts." I used duplicated copies of that essay for a study series on the Book of Acts in my church Prayer Meeting and Bible Study sessions on Wednesday nights.

Then, and ever since then, I combined study with ministry as much as possible. I managed to score an essay prize in the only year out of four that I handed in every essay on time. Every other year I disqualified myself through my lateness. One lecturer commented, "Why so late? If you want to do well, as you do, you must begin early." Great ideal. Poor execution.

I liked preaching class. We got to hear many styles of preaching from our fellow students. Homiletics taught us the craft of preaching, and we all had to preach to our class. In class, we faced a very artificial congregation, often cheeky. At the end of preaching class sometimes students would raise their hand, not in response to the preacher, but to stir the preacher! If a preacher became too flowery or emotional some student at the back, behind the assessing lecturer, may stand and play an air violin. I appreciated gaining the preaching prize in our final year, not as a forecast of future success, but as an affirmation of significant beginnings.

Students now, including those I teach, usually receive a bachelor's degree in theology or ministry or biblical studies after three years. In the sixties we received a theological college certificate. Now however, with greater acceptance of prior learning, such college studies can give you exemptions or recognition for equivalent studies. That's worth knowing!

While at theological college I began studies with the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD) for both the Diploma of Divinity and the Diploma of Religious Education. My college subjects correlated with many subjects in the Dip.Div. and my Teacher's Certificate gave me exemption from some education subjects in the Dip.R.E., so it made sense to have a go. Where the MCD subjects matched my college subjects I did them both. Their other subjects that did not correlate with my college studies, remained to be completed later. Much later! Eventually I got around to finishing the other subjects for both diplomas when working for the church in Christian Education in the seventies. Then at least, I could combine study with ministry again. I scraped in before the ten year maximum period had expired!

I studied for my degrees part-time, while working full-time. That worked for me. It has its ups and downs. One disadvantage is the time it takes. However a major advantage is that the journey, not the goal (an award), educates and inspires. Most of the time I immediately applied what I learned, and also applied my ministry work to my study, both in Australia and overseas.

I taught my students to do that! We found creative ways for them to immediately apply their studies and assignments to their work. They could lead or teach home groups, youth groups or study groups, using their studies. I encouraged them to adapt their studies to the group they led or taught. They could adapt it for children or youth or adults. They could report on how they applied it, and how they involved others in learning activities or ministry to one another. I enjoyed marking those assignments. So often they reported on God's Spirit moving strongly in their groups as they led and taught them.

## **Mission**

My cross-cultural mission experience in PNG opened the way for me to study in the School of World Mission (now School of Intercultural Studies) at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Los Angeles.

I began bending their rules immediately! My supervisors took my requests for more external study to various committee meetings for unusual approval. No other student had done that much external study at Fuller. I managed to complete their masters and doctoral programs while working full-time, on full pay, much to my family's benefit, at least financially.

I began my Fuller studies before I went there. They provided core subjects for external students through their In-Service Program (now available online). I kept their bound photocopied books of notes and their cassettes of internal lectures, although cassettes and cassette players approach dinosaur status now.

Recorded lectures are great. You can listen to them whenever and as often as you like, even when dropping off to sleep, as I did often. You can use them for resources for others, as I did sometimes. You can build on them in your own research and writing, as I did usually.

I still enjoy Edwin Orr's inspiring lectures on the History of Evangelical Awakenings. I loved listening to this leading revival historian's insights and explanations, laced with evangelical fervour and Irish humour. He, being dead, still speaks!

Other core courses I studied that way included ones with Charles Kraft on Anthropology, Alan Tippett (an Aussie pioneer) on Animism or folk religions, Ralph Winter on Mission History, Peter Wagner on Church Growth, and Arthur Glasser on the Theology of Mission.

Those names and courses from the seventies date me, of course. Some of those professors are dead now, but their inspiration and zeal live on in their work, including their books.

Thanks to Fuller Seminary's progressive attitudes, I studied mostly in Australia by distance education. That included completing my master's thesis on *Liberate Leadership* and my doctoral dissertation on *Multiply Ministry*. I visited the seminary three times. That included being there for a term of 12 weeks, or completing two week intensives, by combining holidays and study, supported financially by the church. Fortunately all Uniting Church staff, where I was working then, had to complete continuing education each year, being paid to do so. I'm grateful.

I enrolled for many 'internal' units when I visited Fuller, began my research in their library, bought piles of text books, and often completed the subjects back home. I argued that most of my research focused on apprenticeship style learning and discipling (as with Jesus and Paul in their mission) including Theological Education by Extension (TEE). I wanted to do that too, not just study about it.

Not only did I set records at Fuller for the amount of external study done while still working full-time, I probably set records for taking the longest time to get through it all. Full-time students could complete their master's work in two years. I combined both degrees, with overlapping studies, so took the maximum time allowed of ten years while still working and applying my study to ministry and teaching.

I especially enjoyed John Wimber's Signs and Wonders and Church Growth (MC510) subject, studied internally. It was a controversial subject at Fuller, and its name kept changing to titles such as The Miraculous and Church Growth, or Healing and Miracles. John, a visiting professor with his team of Vineyard bright sparks, came each Monday night for 12 weeks. He involved other professors such as Peter Wagner and Charles Kraft. Following the required hours of teaching input we had a voluntary hour of ministry application or laboratory practice! I loved it. Everyone stayed for these practical times of praying for people each week, learning to pray in faith and with authority, led by the Spirit.

One assignment in that class required us to visit and report on two Vineyard churches, assessing and comparing their approach to ministry. That really interested me. It also provided the Vineyard teaching team with plenty of feedback from the class! The well known evangelical author, John White, attended that class that year, and wrote about it in his book *When the Spirit Comes with Power*. John Wimber's books *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing* cover much of that subject's material, and I adapted it for our degree courses.

I prepared distance courses at Alcorn College using seminar cassettes (common in the seventies and eighties). That work continued at Trinity College, adapted to degree subjects. It continued further at Christian Heritage College, now using on-line resources. My subjects there included Revival History, Signs and Wonders, and the Charismatic Movement.

Some of the most useful assignments I completed involved me in ministry and mission, such as comparing and evaluating Vineyard churches. Other useful assignments involved preparing ministry and mission resources, such as group studies. So in my teaching I often use that kind of assignment. My students and I found assignments very useful that involved them in presenting tutorials, leading sessions in class, or reporting on sessions they led in their own ministries. They then reported on their preparation (usually summarised), and on their presentation, evaluating both. That involved them in finding ways to facilitate group activities and ministry. For example, many students led the class in praying creatively and powerfully for one another.

## **Publications**

Study and teaching require writing. A lot of writing. Thank God for computers! I used to pound out most of my writing on my portable typewriter, all through theological college, all through mission teaching in PNG, all through study with the University of Queensland and also for Fuller Seminary. I typed my doctoral dissertation of nearly 300 pages a total of three times – the first draft for my supervisor, the corrected version for the examining committee, and the final version for private publication. Fortunately I borrowed an electric typewriter for the dissertation. How much quicker, easier and more versatile are computers!

Gradually I published some of my work. At first we used stencils to duplicate everything, and later progressed to photocopied materials. Then, usually with a bit more work, some of it got printed.

My first publication came at the end of theological college. Each student wrote a thesis

during the year after completing classes, our fifth year, also the year of our ordination. So in 1964 I researched “The History of the Baptist Mission in New Guinea.” The weekly *Australian Baptist* paper and the monthly missionary magazine *Vision* provided details. That topic especially interested me because I went there the following year. *Charinga*, the journal of the Australian Baptist Historical Society, published part of that thesis. I was glad that a few more people would be able to read the amazing story of the PNG mission pioneers opening the way for the amazing growth of the church there.

I pounded out my publications in PNG on duplicating stencils with my portable Remington! That included a 50 page duplicated book updating the history of the Baptist mission in PNG. My book *Light on the Mountains: Pioneer Mission in Papua New Guinea* includes that research and early history. The *Australian Baptist* and *Vision* also carried articles I contributed, usually from my newsletters.

To help me learn Sau-Enga I worked for long hours with local interpreters to produce and duplicate the beginnings of a Sau-Enga Vocabulary and Grammar (based on the Kyaka-Enga ones), later wonderfully completed by Sally Burton.

Scripture Union in PNG published Pidgin devotional guides for various books of the Bible and asked me to write the one for the book of James. We used *Nupela Testamen* (New Testament) *Liklik Baibel* (Little Bible), *Ol Stori Bilong Baibel* (All Story belong Bible – Bible Stories) as our main Pidgin sources. That rough trade-language evolved into a well-developed national language, used with local variations, throughout PNG, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Back I Australia I wrote extensively for Uniting Church and Baptist publications as well as for some international journals. I saw a need for an Australian national renewal journal so began editing the *Renewal Journal* in the nineties. We published it twice a year for a decade. I compiled and edited 20 issues, and it found its way into university and college libraries internationally as well as into hundreds of homes. It gained enough visibility to be mentioned in *The International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (2002, p. 513). Now it is available on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) along with other articles and blogs. See the Appendix for a summary of those publications.

Those publications document my research into renewal and revival. After Meg died and I retired from full-time teaching in 2002, I began exploring revival movements more fully ‘on the field’ mainly in the South Pacific but also in such places as Africa, Nepal, and China.

“Those who can, do. Those who can’t, teach,” some say (adapted from George Bernard Shaw)! I combined the doing with the teaching. I’m grateful for the opportunities I’ve had to minister in mission to many pastors and leaders, encouraging them to do what Jesus told us to do. That involved me in renewal ministries and seeing glimpses of revival.

## Chapter 7

### Renewal: begin with doh, rey, me



***Renewal ministries:*** South Pacific student mission team worships and prays in Brisbane church,  
Vanuatu mission team worships and prays at Waugh home in Brisbane

“When you sing, you begin with doh, rey, me (do re me),” sang Maria. The Von Trapp family singers sang together in Austria, America and internationally on tour. Maria, filled with the Spirit, sang new songs glorifying the Lord she loved. So have millions of others.

The sound of music in renewal is one obvious expression of renewal. Glorious hymns from former revivals now give way to current renewal and revival songs. New wineskins carry the new wine.

Renewal music is not renewal, but springs from it and expresses it, just as love songs are not love, but spring from love and express love. God’s great love can flood us with new love for him. God’s powerful Spirit can transform us in many ways including how we worship as well as how we live.

We pray differently. Previously, prayers seemed more like leaving a telephone message on a distant friend's answering machine rather than an intimate phone conversation with a close friend. Prayers for and with other people also changed, and became more expectant, more specific, more bold, including laying hands on people to meet needs.

## **Supernaturally natural**

Renewal springs from God pouring out his Spirit on us, personally and in churches. We are renewed, changed. Jesus changed also, not in nature, but in ministry. The power of the Holy Spirit radically changed Jesus’ life at about age 30. Always obedient, Jesus lived naturally as a man, yet his ministry became supernaturally natural after the Spirit of God anointed him. He was filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit (see Luke 4:1, 18).

Jesus said that we can live as he did, empowered by the Spirit as he was. Somehow I missed that. It’s probably because I knew from boyhood that Jesus was God’s Son, the Messiah. I would expect God’s Son to do creative miracles - turn water into wine, feed multitudes, still the storm, walk on water. God’s Son would heal the sick and cast out demons. As God’s Son, Jesus had divine power, obviously.

I missed the bit that says his divine power is just what he left behind. He emptied himself of it. Although being God’s Son, he became fully human – not Superbaby, nor Superboy, nor Superman. Fully man. His title for himself was the Son of Man.

He emptied himself of his divine rights and powers so that he would indeed be fully human. He remained fully divine, but relinquished those divine powers (see Philippians 2:7).

So how did he do what he did? Jesus explained it clearly. Back home in Nazareth after the Spirit of God came upon him at his baptism, he explained it from Isaiah (see Luke 4:18-19):

*The Spirit of the LORD is upon me,  
Because he has anointed me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;  
He has sent me to heal the broken hearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.*

Then, anointed by God’s Spirit, he healed the sick, threw out evil spirits, and commanded nature. He said we would do the same things he did, and even greater things, and that we



would do them the same way he did, by the power of his Spirit in us. He was going back to his Father who would send his Spirit upon us too.

“Very truly I tell you,” said Jesus, “all who have faith in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12). Faith for life in the Spirit is just like faith for salvation – you ask, and believe!

I feel like I’m in Grade 1 in that! But you’ve got to start somewhere. The beginning for me is still Jesus, crucified and risen, conquering in death and reigning in life. Certainly, Jesus did it all without sin. We don’t. But again the cross is the answer to our dilemma. Jesus’ blood cleanses us from all our sin as we confess and repent.

Slowly I began to put the two together, the power of Jesus’ death and resurrection both for salvation and for living in the power of his Spirit. That includes sanctification, being made holy and set apart for God. And it includes much more. This good news was revolutionary for me, not just theory nor theology, but bread and butter – the basic diet for living in the power of the Spirit. It’s all based on the power of the cross and Jesus’ ultimate victory over everything.

Today, as I write, it is Pentecost Sunday, the annual reminder of the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after Easter (or Passover). The risen Lord told his followers to wait in Jerusalem where, in a few days, they would be baptised in the Holy Spirit.

“This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; for John baptised in water, but you will be baptised in the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:4-5). They were.

Every example of people filled and empowered with the Spirit in the New Testament tells how it happened to believers *after* they believed (Luke 3:16-23; Acts 1-2, 8-11, 19).

- ❖ The Spirit of God anointed Jesus when he was about 30.
- ❖ The followers of Jesus were filled with the Spirit at Pentecost.
- ❖ Peter instructed new believers to be baptised and they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ The Spirit came upon the believers in Samaria when Peter and John laid hands on them.
- ❖ Saul of Tarsus was healed and filled with the Spirit when Ananias prayed for him three days after his conversion on the Damascus road.
- ❖ The Spirit fell on God-fearing Gentile believers in Cornelius’ home in Caesarea as Peter preached.
- ❖ Believers in Ephesus were filled with the Spirit when Paul laid hands on them and prayed for them.

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you,” said Jesus in his final promise (Acts 1:8). It still happens. We need that empowering.

Jesus needed it for his ministry. So did Paul. So do we.

Notice how after his conversion, Paul was filled with the Spirit and healed, then led and empowered by the Spirit (see Acts 9:17-22; 13:2; 16:6-7). Increasingly that is happening now also.

I discovered this infilling or empowering in a Baptist manse in Hobart, Tasmania, on deputation for the mission. That home provided a safe setting, but I also found it surprising.

Meg and I travelled to Tasmania where I spoke at an Easter camp in 1968. Then we visited my friends Doug and Grace Griffiths in Hobart. I met Doug at theological college and they were part of the ministry team in Hobart. Grace told us how she had been healed from severe arthritis, delivered from a critical spirit, filled with the Spirit and she spoke in tongues when people prayed for her in their previous church manse, their home. I found it a powerful testimony.

“Well, if there’s more, I want more,” I said in my heart. There’s always more!

That night I sat cross-legged on their lounge room floor, PNG style. The carpet felt luxurious compared to my bamboo floor in New Guinea. So in the casual comfort of that lounge room I found myself flooded with the Holy Spirit when they prayed for me. An amazing surge of divine love flooded every part of me. I think I hoped for a sudden gift of an Enga dialect to use fluently in PNG, but no such luck! I still had to work on those Enga dialects when I returned to start the central Bible School, and teach village pastors and leaders. Yet, I sensed it was all related, a filling, a flooding, an empowering for mission.



I remember preparing the message for my mission deputation service in their church, the Baptist Tabernacle in Hobart. As I prayed on my knees at my bed God’s Spirit gave me the whole message in a moment! It doesn’t always happen like that, but it did then. I grabbed a sheet of paper and scribbled down the thoughts I had received, combining God’s Word with PNG examples of renewal and revival. I took that one page into the pulpit. The senior minister, very cautious about renewal, shook my hand vigorously after the service and said, “Now that was charismatic!” He approved.

During our next furlough I returned for a month in Tasmania to speak at churches, including in Hobart, so again I visited Doug and Grace who then lived in a renewal community. There I discovered more, once more. One night, after we shared our experiences, including our strengths and weaknesses, Doug and I prayed together and for each other. As Doug placed his hand on my head to pray for me, I felt power like liquid electricity run down my neck from my head into my back. I didn’t understand it, but was curiously content and expectant.

The next day I discovered in the shower that my skin had become well oiled, not its usual dryness, and some weeks later I realised that a skin fungal disease I caught in PNG had disappeared. Previously I could get rid of the fungus with pills or cream, but in hot weather it would annoyingly return. Never again! After that prayer it stopped. We did not pray for healing, nor was I aware that healing had happened. Healing through prayer is often surprising, and much cheaper than using pills and cream. Less bother too.

“Confess your faults to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed,” practical James reminds us, adding, “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

We like the last half of that verse, not the first! Many times I had preached on the last part of that verse, but never on the first part. I discovered that they belong together, literally. Our Catholic friends leave us for dead on that one! They’re used to confessing sins to someone. We are a kingdom of priests, and can certainly pray for one another and bless one another. Alas, we often seem too proud to do that!

I returned to Sydney and shared my adventures with Meg as we sat together in bed. Our daughter slept peacefully in her cot and Meg lay ‘great with child’ just before our son Jonathan’s birth.

Meg asked me to pray for her to be filled with the Spirit. Maybe that was the right timing for us. It enveloped us in the warmth of divine love as we sat together in bed and I prayed for my wife with my arm around her. We felt the warmth of divine love, far greater than our human love. Next morning Meg commented how everything was sharper, cleaner, and brighter.

Soon after Jonathan's birth we moved to Brisbane in 1971 where I worked with the Methodist church and continued university studies. There we encountered the wave of renewal that touched thousands of churches around the world in the seventies.

Gifts of the Spirit seemed to be activated more fully in our lives. I had been aware of the Lord's guiding or the Spirit's leading and help most of my life. Now I found his gifts strengthened and sharpened. More gifts emerged, including the controversial ones summarised in 1 Corinthians 12:6-8. As I responded or tuned in to the Lord and his Spirit, more happened. It had been like that all my life, but now it seemed stronger and more specific.

Churches in which we served the Lord believed in and encouraged the use of spiritual gifts. That's one reason we became involved with those churches. They provided a committed community in which gifts could be used and developed. These giftings and ministries gradually strengthened in our lives in the context of community, both in our church life, including renewal teams visiting many churches, and in our home life. Linked with that wider community, we lived out those biblical instructions in our home and family communal life style. Led by the Spirit, we lived in community as well as in helping to develop supportive communities in churches through home groups and community houses.

### **Renewal in Christian Education**



I worked in the progressive Department of Christian Education (DCE) in the Methodist Church from 1971. Our offices in Wesley House adjoined the majestic gothic cathedral of Wesley Central Mission (now Albert Street Uniting Church). I rode the ferry across the Brisbane River from our home attached to the then Methodist Training College and Bible School at Kangaroo Point.

Like all DCE staff, I conducted training courses for Sunday School teachers, youth group leaders, and elders, as well as leading children's and youth camps in the school holidays. Also I explored renewal developments then spreading through the churches, often disturbing them. We wanted to help people understand renewal, not run away from it.

Those early days of renewal sweeping Australian churches created change, and confusion. My job involved helping people understand and adapt to those changes. Meg and I often visited the rapidly growing Windsor Full Gospel Church in Brisbane where Trevor Chandler and Clark Taylor led hundreds of people in dynamic worship, preaching and prayer ministry. Visitors of all denominations came to see and be touched by God. The Christian Life Centres and Christian Outreach Centres later grew out of their ministries.

I began praying quietly in tongues in those days, after praying with a friend, confessing blockages to yielding to the Spirit. No Papua New Guinea dialect for me! Just an edifying sense of worship and wonder.

My work expanded into renewal ministries across all denominations. It included teaching on renewal in leadership seminars, and I taught renewal electives in conventions. Youth leaders often welcomed these innovations, as youth tend to do! I began leading renewal camps or conferences, roping in ministers from many denominations to speak,

including Pentecostals. That was new for the Methodists, although I enjoyed reminding them of their fiery beginnings in the Wesley revivals of the eighteenth century evangelical awakening in England.

I duplicated and published renewal resource materials including editing two books *The Jesus Revolution* and *Charisma*. These carried articles and testimonies about God pouring out his Spirit in the early seventies.

Spiritual gifts, both personal and communal, grabbed our attention. We explored how the best use of spiritual gifts is proper use, not misuse nor disuse. I began teaching and publishing about various streams of God's gifting, including these three:

1. Personal callings and gifting are given by the grace of God our Father. Often seen in our personalities and preferences, these motivating gifts include prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, and showing mercy in compassion (Romans 12:6-8). They blossom in us as we offer ourselves to God, not being conformed to this world but being transformed by the *renewing* of our minds (Romans 12:1-2).

2. Churches began to develop team leadership including the gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11). These gifts from Christ, the head of his church, are the people – not just their ministries. They may be full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid. Most are unpaid, as with Jesus and the apostles. Think, for example, of the huge army of voluntary home group leaders giving pastoral care to millions of people, and reaching out to others in evangelism.

3. Manifestations of the Spirit in our lives are given to each of us for the common good. They include a word or revelation of wisdom, a word or revelation of knowledge, faith, various gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy or speaking from God, discerning spirits, various kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Notice how our Western theologies often have problems with many of those spiritual gifts! But in the early church they were *supernaturally natural*.

Paul even ranks God's gifts in order of ministry importance in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guiding or administering, and of different kinds of tongues (1 Corinthians 12: 28). We often mix up the order and emphasise the least the most!

I love the way Paul emphasises the variety and necessity of all God's gifts in a Trinitarian summary (I Corinthians 12:4-5):

- ❖ There are varieties of gifts (*charismaton*, charismata), but the same Spirit distributes them.
- ❖ There are varieties of services (*diakonion*, diaconate), but the same Lord directs them.
- ❖ There are varieties of activities (*energon*, energy) but the same God disperses them.

Then Paul soars into the hymn of love in 1 Corinthians 13, beginning with the reminder that all those gifts without love amount to nothing.

"Make love your aim," he urges, "and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially speaking a word from God" (1 Corinthians 14:1).

## Wesley Central Mission, Brisbane



Perhaps rushing in where angels fear to tread, I offered to lead weekly ecumenical renewal meetings in the cathedral of Methodism. The former Wesley Central Mission (now Albert Street Uniting Church) stands in gothic splendour with its majestic spire in the heart of Brisbane city, near the City Hall. Dwarfed by surrounding sky scrapers, it still points skyward to higher realms.

Why there? I don't know if I had divine guidance, or diving giddiness. We could have held the meetings anywhere, but I dived in to holding

them there in the heart of the city and the heart of the church. It made a bold and significant declaration back in 1972.

The ages of those attending varied from our youngest daughter sleeping in her basket (with our other two at home in Auntie Daphne's care) to many grey haired supporters. The meetings attracted committed youth and adult leaders from many different churches.

We met on Tuesday nights. The Rev George Nash, then minister of the church, preached at our first weekly renewal meeting. He told about a minister who stood at the open casket of a deceased friend.

"He looks alive, doesn't he? He looks like he is sleeping," observed his minister friend.

"The church can be like that," George Nash added. "We can look like we are alive. But we may be just sleeping, or worse, we may be dead. We need reviving."

He gave us his blessing, especially as our ecumenical meetings included speakers from all denominations. I found charismatic ministers and Pentecostal pastors from near and far to come and speak each week.

What variety! Vigorous Pentecostal pastors, gentle Catholic priests, and enthusiastic denominational ministers told of the mighty works of God in their own lives and in their churches. They reported on lives transformed, people healed or set free, and natural, spontaneous evangelism. Whenever itinerant healing evangelists and renewal leaders visited Brisbane, such as Revs John Blacker and Dan Armstrong, I gladly involved them.

One night a drunken man from the nearby park wandered in, attracted by our singing. He happily staggered his way to the front of the church to dance with our guest speaker, a Catholic priest. Some of our young fellows gently guided him out to the church steps and sat with him for the rest of the meeting, talking about Jesus.

No one available could play the awesome pipe organ there, so Tom and Helen Spencer faithfully loaded their electronic organ onto a friend's utility and brought it in each week, where Helen played by ear. We did stick to a pre-arranged list of songs, but wanted to be led by the Spirit, as much as we could be with all our human and cultural limitations.

My friend David Chisholm, a Presbyterian, worked in the Methodist DCE staff with me. One grand night David played 'Amazing Grace' on his bagpipes, filling the huge church with its stirring strains. David chose to play from up in the back balcony, unseen by the congregation below. Not quite the last trumpet sounding, but close! His friend Alison Reid attended regularly and became a wonderful family friend also.

Those were the days of Scripture in Song, compiled by David and Dale Garrett in New

Zealand. They published the first of their three Scripture in Song books in 1971. They gathered renewal songs from around the world. We used their overhead transparencies, with occasional use of great hymns from the Methodist hymn book. Many songs were specific scriptures, KJV of course! Some of the language sounds strange 40 years later. We sang these and others:

*Many Psalms:*

This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord hath made (118:24)

O give thanks to the Lord for he is good (136:1)

Praise ye the Lord (Psalm 150 in full)

*Solomon's Song (2:4, 16):*

My beloved is mine and I am his ...

He brought me to his banqueting table ...

And his banner over me is love.

*From the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:33; 4:4; 7:7):*

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God ...

Man shall not live by bread alone ...

Ask and it shall be given unto you ...

*Practical Christian living:*

A new commandment I give unto you (John 13:34)

It's no longer I that liveth (Galatians 2:20)

Not by might, nor by power (Zechariah 4:6)

Rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4)

*Songs of devotion:*

Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10)

I am the Lord that healeth thee (Exodus 15:36)

In thee O Lord do I put my trust (Psalm 31:1; 71:1)

*Great expressions of worship:*

For thou art great and doest wondrous things (Psalm 86:10-12)

For unto us a child is born (Isaiah 9:6)

He is Lord (Philippians 2:11)

Thou art worthy (Revelation 4:11)

Hallelujah (Revelation 19:6)

We often concluded with Jude's benediction (verses 24-25): "Now unto him who is able to keep, able to keep you from falling and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever, Amen."

Most of the congregation came from denominational churches, so we included some of the great worship and revival hymns including these by Charles Wesley:

Christ the Lord is risen today

O for a thousand tongues to sing

And can it be that I should gain

Sometimes our worship flowed naturally into spontaneous harmonies. I vividly remember one time when the free, harmonious singing led to a beautiful solo, in tongues. Knowing Paul's instruction that messages in tongues need an interpretation, I looked forward to the sung interpretation. The soloist sang beautifully, like an opera love song, and then sat down. No interpretation. Then I hoped someone else would have an inspired interruption,

preferably an interpretation!

Suddenly I had an interpretation. Had I been bold enough I could have sung it, but I chickened out. So I found myself speaking free verse, instead of singing it, while also ‘seeing’ an amazing garden with its soft path winding among enormous flowering bushes, vivid with colour. The song expressed the Lord’s love for us and his original intention to walk with us in intimate perfection – perfection in relationship was well as in creation. He is restoring that intimacy by his Spirit as he renews us all, and even renews creation where whole communities repent.

## Toowoomba

My Christian Education work took me to the garden city of Toowoomba, in the scenic ranges west of Brisbane, for four years from 1973 to 1976. I returned to Wesley Central Mission in Brisbane to lead the renewal meetings on Tuesday nights for many months, but as work increased in my new location we finished the Wesley meetings. By then, other churches were establishing week night renewal meetings or home groups. Pentecostal churches also grew rapidly.



I worked half time as the inaugural director of Life Line in Toowoomba and half time in Christian Education, including leading another weekly renewal meeting. This time we met in Raff Street Methodist Church hall in Toowoomba, and once more the congregation came from many denominations. Again people helped with music, especially Keith and Myrtle Davies, using their keyboard and guitar along with others. Ian Shelton actively helped with these meetings often leading or speaking. Eventually Ian and his wife Betty established Toowoomba City Church, a thriving independent church with its school and city-wide ministries,

expanding into national and international ministries. They worked hard to encourage combined churches activities in the city as well as supporting community transformation developments overseas and in Australia.

Some of our initial Life Line telephone counsellors came from churches or groups also involved in renewal. We explored the lively interaction of personal and community care, helping people in need and growing personally ourselves. Jesus’ ministry helped people in the power of the Spirit. We wanted to do likewise.

Meg and I invited anyone interested to a weekly group in our home. That became a dynamic leaders group of highly committed friends, active in their various churches. We explored Spirit-led personal and communal growth and service.

Many of that group became effective lay pastors and preachers as well as leaders in various churches. These included our friends of 30 years, Bob and Ruth Bramley, Jean Sizer, Pauline Antrobus, and Brian and Jenny Henman. They all helped people in many ways including Life Line counselling, home group leadership and caring for people in need. Later, nursing sister Jean and bee keeper Brian became lay pastors in many Uniting Church country parishes and engineer Bob served as Administrator at Gateway Baptist.

My publications *The Leader’s Goldmine* and similar study books, such as *Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit*, and *Living in the Spirit* grew out of those group activities. We opened our hearts

to one another and to God – risky but rewarding. We discussed everything to do with our life in Christ and our growth in his Spirit.

I remember a whole evening discussing fasting. We discovered everyone had fasted, with enormous variety in the length and style, fasting from food, TV or with other forms of self-denial. I guess it was Lent then! Some followed an occasional Wesleyan fast, two days a week till evening, which Wesley required from all his leaders. Others fasted for the rest of the day after a good breakfast. Some fasted at lunch times.

I fasted occasionally, as led. That seemed to happen on days when I led a night meeting, such as the weekly renewal service. Then, after the meeting, I would come home and eat heartily. However, I had a longer fast in our final year there, following Christmas. My diary for January had no entries, typical for the holiday season. We had been away on holiday in December, so I found myself with a month to fast and pray. Sounded biblical!

Being a zealous, radical leader I planned on a real he-man fast of only water. Meg, practical as ever, insisted I check with our Christian doctor, about the effects of such fasting. At first he had no answer – no one had ever asked him about that. After consulting his books he phoned to say it would be fine for a month, so long as I did not engage in physical work. An excuse to dodge manual jobs around the house!

To my surprise, after a short while cleansing my system with water, I was strongly led to beef up the intake to orange juice and then skimmed milk. I discovered Toowoomba had a skimmed milk factory, so I bought bags of the powder. That solved the problem of working out how to get skimmed milk from our daily supply of homogenised milk! Our kitchen became coated with the misty powder each time I mixed up a new batch. My young children did not realise I was fasting, because I always drank with them at meal times, progressing from water to the harder stuff.

“When will you eat?” asked my daughter.

“Later,” I replied truthfully, not knowing how much later! She was happy, and I was wondering, *when?* I didn’t really know. I did know that I felt energised, and discovered later from health professionals that such a fast is called a cleansing fast. I guess I needed cleansing physically as well as spiritually. I remember that hearing from God seemed easier and clearer then.

Those 40 days concluded in a unique way at a Christian Education staff gathering at Alcorn College in Brisbane. We had an unusual meal. After the main course we shared bread together in communion. After dessert we drank wine in communion. Being a Methodist college it was the ‘non-al’ variety. Each time, with the bread and wine, we paused for appropriate prayer. We finished with tea or coffee. Splendid! Perhaps I never enjoyed a meal as much as that one. I also discovered that my abundant orange juice and skimmed milk diet freed me completely from any constipation!

Then in 1977 I began teaching at Alcorn College, formerly the Methodist Training College and Bible School. So we moved back to Brisbane, and also started living in community in Corinda.



## Wesley Church, Kangaroo Point



Wesley Church at Kangaroo Point is obviously Methodist, and obviously Australian! This beautiful old brick church (though much smaller than Wesley Central Mission) hosted another renewal congregation from 1977.

“Why am I doing this?” I wondered, as we started charismatic renewal meetings there on Sunday nights in the cold, mid-year winter. We began with a small handful of keen people. We had no music. None of us could even play a guitar!

Rev Wal Gregory supervised the congregation there, along with his work as Director of Social Welfare for Queensland Methodists, caring for the disabled and prisoners. I taught at Alcorn College nearby. Rev Col Warren, principal at the college, joined in. We three musketeers met for prayer each week and shared together in leading and speaking at the charismatic service we started in the church on Sunday nights, all for one, and one for all.

The One above all led us all where we had never been led before, in that shared Spirit-led leadership. We asked God for musicians. Then young people who were studying music at the Conservatorium of Music in Brisbane and in the University of Queensland began coming, and brought their friends. Bill Clarke played the piano, and also the pipe organ for the traditional morning service. Others accompanied him around the piano on Sunday nights. Their music blended into a beautiful band, flowing together in harmony as the Spirit led them. Of course, that required hours together during the week in prayer and jam sessions where they learned to create powerful harmonies.

We used our ever growing collection of overhead transparencies arranged alphabetically for ready access. Our worship singing for over an hour included hymns and choruses, especially those that honoured the Lord, such as:

Majesty, worship his majesty.

He is exalted.

Exalt the Lord our God.

All hail King Jesus.

Reign King Jesus, reign.

There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God’s own Son.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Songs and choruses flowed freely into one another and often into spontaneous free singing including ‘singing in the Spirit’ in harmonies, unknown tongues and known languages. That spontaneity often led us into sung or spoken messages of encouragement in prophecies or sometimes in tongues and interpretation. We encouraged people to ‘have a go’ and many did, learning as we went along.

Wal, Col and I shared the leading and preaching, each in our own style. We probably let the roster dictate too much, but in our weekly prayer meeting we could also be led or prompted about who would do what. At that time Col and I both pursued doctoral studies in renewal as well as applying that in our teaching and preaching.

After the message, during closing worship, we prayed with anyone who wanted prayer – for anything. Most coming for prayer wanted more of God, more of Jesus, and more of his Spirit meeting needs, healing, setting free and anointing for service. With so many university students attending, the numbers seeking prayer swelled every June and November at exam

times! We encouraged students to study and not depend too much on ‘words of knowledge’ in exams – and prayed for clarity and peace.

Friends brought friends. Interested students from Alcorn College joined us, some of them from Pacific nations. That added to our variety of known tongues as well. We needed to disciple those interested, and to grow together in life in the Spirit.

So I began a Friday night renewal prayer group at the college. We included informal communion or a ‘love feast’ every week. Diane Reynoldson (later Smeal), who also lived with us in our extended family, made a marvellous loaf of bread in our kitchen each week and others brought bottles of sparkling grape juice. Many of us fasted on those Fridays, so we really appreciated large chunks of fresh bread and full glasses of grape juice or non-al wine.

We combined those times of communion with worship accompanied by a guitar. We prayed for one another, and we shared many ‘words’ or impressions including descriptive pictures or parables as we sat around together on the carpeted floor.

Tom Markotanyos, then a student at the college (later a pastor, married to Glenys, a student he met there), often saw prophetic pictures such as these:

- ❖ As we pass through the cross our wheelbarrow of old junk is transformed into a barrow full of sparkling gems.
- ❖ Too often we camp around the signposts (such as renewal or revival) rather than following them.
- ❖ Jesus stands in an elevator with us, but as it goes deeper (or higher) people get out at each level, but Jesus says, “Will no one go all the way with me?”
- ❖ The living water flows into many different kinds of cups, so don’t argue over the cups, just drink.
- ❖ Corked bottles filled with blessing need more than one person to open them, as in unity, and then the blessings can flow.
- ❖ Each of us stands on a platform supported by many pillars, many of them crumbling or collapsing or being knocked down, till eventually there is only the central one remaining, the Lord himself.

Others had similar ‘words’ to encourage or challenge us. Paul Varendorf, a landscape gardener living in our community, saw us as a child helping the father in the garden, but actually messing it up. The father did not mind, as he desired and enjoyed the time together, and he can bless the mess. He makes something good out of it all as we ‘help’ him.

The core prayer group grew, and became a leaders’ discipleship group. Gradually people in that group began to establish other home groups. Some of those groups grew out of community houses which developed to support and nurture youth, especially students.

Many young people appreciated the opportunity to live in a Christian community. The communities linked to the church sought our supervision. So I met with the leaders of the community houses and the prayer groups for breakfast one morning each week in Arthur and Cathy Hartwig’s home. Those leaders could raise any concerns, and we prayed for many needs. Doug McDonald established one of the first community houses linked to the church. He helped lead the initial core group, and had a strong voluntary pastoral role among the community houses and prayer groups, later shared with his wife Eileen. Doug and his supportive friend John Patton also became elders in the church.

We provided basic guidelines for people living in a community house. They would meet together as a community at least one night each week to share and pray. They would all be

part of the home group that met in that house on another night each week, to which other friends would come to worship, share and pray. They would worship with us at the church on Sunday nights, and some came to the more traditional service in the morning as well. They would stay out of the bedrooms of the opposite sex. Married couples, usually household leaders, had their privacy in their own bedroom.

It worked well. We saw specific prayers answered, often. People without work found work suitable to their abilities. Many personal and family needs were met. Evangelism became a natural sharing of lifestyle. One of our young men picked up a drunken, angry hitch hiker and took him to a community house prayer group. That visitor was amazed to find young people enjoying sitting around on the floor singing and talking naturally to one another and to God. He asked to stay there for a while, livening up the household with his colourful language, and soon became a Christian.

Some of those young people became leaders in the growing Sunday School at the church, very creatively. Our family's primary school aged children enjoyed it, sometimes exploring the surrounding area on trek with 'Moses' or with 'Jesus' – finding manna and quail or Zacchaeus up in a tree.

Being human, we had problems and disappointments. Sometimes people made unwise decisions, or strayed. Generally, however, the believers supported one another through their trials and struggles. We strove for an accepting, non-judgemental fellowship, sometimes failing but often fulfilling that goal.

Our team from the church also led many ecumenical or combined churches meetings, both at Wesley Church and also in locations such as Mayne Hall at the University of Queensland.

That congregation provided a wonderful team for the many renewal and family camps I led as part of my Christian Education work. The regular Easter youth camps at Cunningham's Gap in the mountains developed over many years into a powerful renewal camp for all ages. Some of our young people became involved in missions such as with Youth with a Mission (YWAM). That included Neil Ennis (later the helpful voluntary technician for [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)), Daryl Krause (later Missions Director with YWAM in Norway), Margaret Young a doctor in Cambodia and Sue Higgins teaching in China.

My work at Alcorn College blended well with Wesley Church, with our community houses, and with ecumenical involvement. I had great freedom to explore and initiate classes on renewal and revival at college, especially as I had been applying that in ministry across many denominations.

During the late seventies I met monthly for prayer with Bishop Ralph Wicks, then appointed to St John's Anglican Cathedral, and Father Vincent Hobbs, leader of the Catholic charismatic meetings at the Bardon parish church. Those small prayer meetings in the bishop's office led to us holding ecumenical renewal meetings in the Anglican and Catholic cathedrals in Brisbane, as well as Albert Street Uniting Church, formerly Wesley Central Mission where I had led renewal services in the early seventies.

Juan Carlos Ortiz, radical Pentecostal pastor from Argentina, spoke at our first ecumenical renewal service in the vast St John's cathedral. He was visiting Brisbane, so I suggested he speak. What a day! We worshipped with that huge organ swelling for great hymns and choruses. Teresa Bonasia from Bardon Catholics sang opera style with her anointed solos, including the Lord's Prayer. Johnny Ortiz spoke – on baptism, of all things! Yes, water baptism. He lifted the topic way beyond how much water, what method, and what

age, to the powerful reality of being baptised into Christ, part of his body, living in resurrection life.

Bishop Ralph Wicks wrote about those quarterly services in his autobiography, *One Rung from the Top*. His article, reproduced from his book in *Renewal Journal* No. 2 ([www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)), reports:

Ecumenical Renewal services at St John's Cathedral drew packed houses. The Rev. Geoff Waugh, from a Baptist-Uniting Church background, and a Roman Catholic priest, Father Vincent Hobbs, were co-convenors of these rallies, some of which were also held at St Stephen's Roman Catholic Cathedral and the Albert Street Uniting Church. These were exciting times as lives were changed, Holy Spirit power was in evidence and healings took place. A small number of diocesan priests were blessed and their ministries enriched.

However, it was not all plain sailing. Some clergy regarded me as a "weirdo" but one thing they could not deny: The proclamation of Jesus and God's gifts of salvation by grace through faith became key features of my preaching. I was reminded by Scripture that the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus.

The pipe organs in those majestic churches accompanied the moving worship of the 'packed houses' with wonderful hymns including 'How Great Thou Art' and 'Holy, Holy, Holy' and well known worship choruses such as 'Majesty' and 'He is Lord'. Leading churchmen preached and prayer teams from the churches prayed with hundreds at the end of each service. I felt that God loved to bless us as we honoured and worshipped him together. Those gatherings ceased after Bishop Ralph retired to Caloundra. Since then others have continued that vision and gathered combined churches together in Brisbane for prayer and worship.

Eventually Wesley Church grew in numbers and income, sufficient to call full-time ministers, and Wal, Col and I became involved in other churches or ministries.

## **Gateway Baptist Church**

At that time from 1984, the Holland Park Baptist Church in Brisbane invited Brian and Moira Andrew to lead the church. They had been on the pastoral team at Spreydon Baptist Church in New Zealand, a leading charismatic church there. Working with Jim Miller, the voluntary full-time elder, and other leaders, Brian led the church in renewal and growth. Our family joined the church and appreciated its many ministries. Eventually it became Gateway Baptist Church.

In 1993 Gateway Church moved from the Holland Park suburban church and eight years of services in Mansfield High School hall to the Gateway Centre, Mackenzie, on 27 acres of natural parkland. Gateway's worship centre is the reconstructed Queensland pavilion from Brisbane's Expo '88, the year long celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement in Australia.

"We are middle-of-the-road charismatic, open to all the gifts of the Spirit," declared Brian. The church grew from a typical suburban congregation of 120 to over 1200 five years later. In the seven years to 1991 they recorded 1,000 conversions, 450 baptisms, and the weekly offerings increased from \$1,000 to over \$13,000.

By the nineties a pastoral team of eight took care of the steadily expanding ministries including 40 home and ministry groups, over a dozen full-time voluntary interns in leadership training, congregational training courses for a variety of ministries, church planting in Queensland and inter-state, and overseas missionary support including church members working in the slums of Asia.

All ages attended all services but families with prams and story books abounded in the mornings, and young people bound in at night. Our own teenage children participated. Church services became a celebration, the mood relaxed, informal and expectant.

New to the weekly bulletin in those days was the tear-off section to indicate your interests, note needs, and record changes to names, addresses, phone numbers or a home group. That helped keep the church's computer directory up to date each week and gave valuable information to the pastoral and visitation teams.

Another innovation back then was the greeting time during the service. Visitors were welcomed and invited to fill in a visitors' card or the tear-off slip. Everyone had a few minutes to greet people around them and perhaps get to know new people.

The services had a creative blend of the new and the old: choruses and hymns; announcements combined with comments by others; prayer and singing woven together as planned yet at times adapted or changed according to need; creative ministries in drama or dance; people worshipping freely without manipulation, some sitting, some standing. The pastoral team often prayed for people at the front, with new members, new home group pastors, couples to be married, dedication of babies, and commissioning people for special ministries or mission.

Preachers sometimes used overhead projected summaries or illustrations. I enjoyed preaching there in an atmosphere of faith and expectancy. Following the message anyone could respond for prayer at the front. Pastors and ministry teams prayed with anyone about any need: conversion, repentance, being filled with the Spirit, release of spiritual gifts, healings, quiet counselling, and sometimes referral to a pastor for follow-on care or ministry.

Occasionally the congregation would pray together in clusters. Some people might balk at that, but no one was compelled to pray aloud. Most jumped into this ministry time with enthusiasm, expecting the Lord to touch people with his Spirit in healing, or release, or renewal. He did, often.

Office staff responded on Mondays with letters of welcome to newcomers, or giving follow-up teams the relevant phone numbers, such as for inviting people to attend a home group or to be interviewed for membership. If you wanted to talk further, your phone caller may suggest you get together sometime, perhaps for morning or afternoon tea. Many did.

People in home groups prayed together and discussed church business issues. So at the quarterly business meetings the elders' recommendations usually passed with a huge majority or unanimously. They had already been worked through in the groups. That gave more time for worship and prayer at business meetings. A young man was converted at one of the Annual General Meetings through the worship and testimonies!

Most discipling happened through home groups or interest groups. If you wanted to belong to the group you just kept coming. By the third week you would receive an information sheet to fill in for the computer records in the church office. Your name was recorded as part of that home group. That group then had responsibility for your pastoral care. Those would be the people in the church you came to know best and looked forward to seeing again on Sundays.

Home groups became the primary nurture, training and outreach groups in the church. Group members supported and challenged one another. Emerging cell group leaders learned on the job, some of them becoming home group leaders later on when the group multiplied.

They didn't all function perfectly. Few do! Abilities, gifting and time available for preparation and pastoral care vary considerably among group leaders. Area pastors, on the full-time pastoral team, supervised the groups in their area, especially supporting the group leaders.

Some people joined interest groups or age groups. One young adults' group organised relief for the poor. At Christmas, 1990, they helped distribute two tonnes of donated mutton and a few thousand dollars of other provisions to poor or unemployed Brisbane people. That care ministry continued and developed through the years.

Training courses, offered on many nights, covered topics such as Foundations (for new Christians or members), Personal Ministry Development, Bethel Bible studies, Home Group Leadership, Personal Counselling, Prayer Ministries, Creative Ministries, Urban Mission, Lifestyle Evangelism, Family Ministries, Missionary Interest, and Church Planting.

Specialist ministries included doctors and counsellors offering their skills with faith and prayer, prayer for inner healing or prayer counselling, half-way houses, and some experiments in community houses for discipleship or support of some people.

Gateway interns, involved in full-time voluntary service, studied at the Gateway College. Many of these graduates moved into pioneering ministries among the poor overseas, in various cross-cultural missions, and in renewal churches in Australia.

Renewal in the church and in the nation saw hundreds of churches ministering effectively in these ways. It can happen in any denomination, in any church. Gateway church became a pioneer among Australian denominational charismatic churches. Our family participated in that local revival and I appreciated being a non-staff elder some of that time. We kept discovering ways to pray creatively together and respond to the Spirit together, in church services, in pre-service prayer meetings, in training sessions, in home groups and age and interest groups. Later, Tim Hannah and then Jason Elsmore led the church as senior pastors with strong pastoral team support. You can find current details on their web site ([www.gatewaybap.com](http://www.gatewaybap.com)).

## **Renewal Fellowship**

Our family still lived in our community house at Corinda, linked mostly with the Wesley Uniting Church at Kangaroo Point, and then later with Gateway Baptist. We started a home group there, catering mainly for older people. Many of them attended the Wesley night services, and some were part of Gateway Baptist or other churches.

Hilary Mackerras played the piano for us, and together we all learned to worship as led by the Spirit. We shared needs or concerns each week and prayed for one another, learning to trust God for appropriate words and his gentle, powerful touch in our lives.

Eventually Hilary's husband David joined her in coming each week although at that time he did not have a personal faith in Christ. He taught electrical engineering at the University of Queensland and invented a lightning counter to measure lightning strikes. So we had many lively discussions about faith and science in our group! Eventually David also believed in Christ and became a strong supporter of our home group and the Renewal Fellowship which grew out of it. We met each Wednesday night in their home for worship and prayer.

During the mid-eighties Alcorn College, where I taught, merged into Trinity Theological

College in the Uniting Church, so I found myself on the staff of the theological college. That was unique for this Baptist minister, with the gracious support of my Uniting Church friends. I taught practical ministry subjects and supervised courses in distance education.



At that time I felt led to start a Friday night renewal meeting at the theological college, a rather unusual development for a theological college. Our Friday night home group agreed, so we relocated from our home to begin the interdenominational Renewal Fellowship at the college, located first at St Lucia near the University of Queensland and then at the church headquarters at Auchenflower in Brisbane.

Numbers attending grew from a dozen to 30 in a few weeks. Later, in the early nineties that grew again to over 100 meeting on Friday and also Sunday nights. We did not form a church but remained a renewal group offering that kind of worship and ministry to people from many churches. Most came from denominational churches which did not offer renewal ministry.

We tried to be led by the Spirit in everything, *including the choice of worship songs with no pre-arranged or pre-rehearsed lists*. That's not easy. Our own habits and interests easily intrude. Worship became the main feature each night. That included about two hours of music and singing combined with Scripture reading, prophetic words or songs, and many times of praying with people for a range of different needs. During those prayer ministry times we usually continued with worship. The music or songs beautifully harmonised with the prayer ministry at the front, often prophetically, confirming what we were praying.

We used the well-known renewal songs, but focused strongly on worship, honouring God, adoring Jesus, and celebrating the Spirit's power and the great glory of God. Our choruses blended seamlessly with great revival worship hymns such as:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty.  
To God be the glory, great things he has done.  
Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son.  
Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne.  
O worship the King, all glorious above.  
All hail the power of Jesus' name.  
At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.

We loved to sing worship songs directly to the Lord, including:

Father/Jesus/Spirit we love you, we praise you, we adore you.  
Father/Jesus/Spirit I adore you.  
Father in heaven, how we love you.  
Exalted, you will ever be exalted.  
Jesus, name above all names.  
I give you all the honour.  
O Lord you're beautiful, your face is all I seek.  
Reign King Jesus, reign over all the nations  
Spirit of the living God fall afresh on me.  
You are beautiful beyond description.

You are the King of Glory, you are the Prince of Peace.

We found ourselves naturally expressing third person songs about God in second person prayers to our Lord, such as these:

All hail King Jesus... throughout eternity I'll sing your praises.

You are Lord, you are risen from the dead and you are Lord.

You are exalted, our King you're exalted on high.

Your name is higher than any other.

Your name is as ointment poured forth.

Your name is wonderful ... Jesus my Lord.

We give thanks to you Lord for you are good.

Hosanna ... Lord we lift up your name.

Praise the name of Jesus, you're my rock.

Our pianist, Hilary, preferred to use published music books, so arranged them for quick access, and memorised the songs' location and number, as well as using some scores in transparent plastic folder books. The worship, however, would often lead into spontaneous, Spirit-led music. Both the published and spontaneous music flowed in anointed creativity. *At times unrehearsed, spontaneous music accompanied Bible readings, enriching and illustrating the spoken word.* I appreciated the times that other instruments such as a violin, cello or flute accompanied the piano, harmonising together.

*"Sometimes the whole body of people present would flow, for quite a length of time, from chorus to free worship in tongues, to solos, to combined singing that rose and fell and moved and changed, glorifying the Lord,"* noted our chief musician.

I would usually give a 'word' based on a Bible passage, trying to stay prophetically with the specific leading of the Spirit. I found, for example, that my messages on Sunday nights related to the gospel reading about Jesus in the lectionary readings for that Sunday. That linked naturally to the morning readings and messages in various congregations of those attending, especially those from Uniting, Lutheran, Anglican, and Catholic churches.

Each Sunday night we shared informal communion, using large buns and plastic glasses for grape juice. Our communion flowed naturally with the worship each night, rather unpredictably. Sometimes people came to the front to receive the bread and juice and personal prayer as well. At other times we passed it around and continued in worship together, often with prophetic words or songs encouraging or challenging us. Most often we shared bread and 'wine' together in clusters after the message and closing worship, praying personally for one another. When I was away on ministry or mission trips, Bill Daicos (Greek Orthodox) usually led worship and Don Singer (Baptist) led communion, sharing an inspired word.

We provided a library of a few hundred books on renewal. It cost us nothing. Many of us loaned our personal books to the Fellowship's library, and lost a few in the process! We asked borrowers to note their name, phone number, book borrowed, date borrowed and date returned in our register. Some faithful volunteers then chased up the ones with no return date. Usually that worked, with people repenting on the phone.

Books by David Wilkerson, Pat Boone, Michael Harper, David Watson, David Pytches, Juan Carlos Ortiz, Kathryn Kuhlman, Oral Roberts, T L Osborn, John G Lake, Agnes Sanford, and Yonggi Cho seemed most popular along with books in the late nineties about renewal in Toronto, London, Sunderland and Pensacola. A decade of library use registered over 2,500 borrowings.



Finances stayed low key, as we had no salaries to pay, ever. We all ministered voluntarily. Our offering box near the door, tabernacle or temple style, provided one means of giving. Don Singer carefully handled the finances through the Uniting Church account. Don, with his wife June, faithfully attended both our home group and then the Renewal Fellowship. We gave most of the offerings to mission, amounting to many thousands of dollars each year. The Fellowship supported some of my travel expenses in our mission trips.

A core group of us met on Wednesday nights for prayer. Strong worship led into anointed personal prayer and ministry to one another. We prayed especially for the Friday and Sunday night meetings, but also for our teams travelling to minister in other churches and overseas in mission trips.

During the 15 years of our meetings we saw many changes, including a steadily growing number of churches introducing renewal services on Sunday nights or starting renewal prayer groups mid-week. I received invitations to speak at such churches or groups, and had a ready-made team from the Fellowship to assist, including leading worship in some churches. We took a team to visit the aboriginal revival celebrations on Elcho Island in northern Australia.

John Wimber and his Vineyard teams led conferences in Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth in the eighties and nineties, hosted by Dan Armstrong. They had a strong impact in Australia, encouraging people to minister to one another in faith. I attended them all, and organised the regional conferences in Brisbane following each national conference. So we had many Vineyard speakers and teams helping us to become more supernaturally natural.

During 1997-1998 I appreciated leading monthly Saturday night renewal rallies at Gateway Baptist Church, supported by Tim Hannah, the new senior pastor. Those inter-church meetings combined our usual Renewal Fellowship style worship, with some Gateway musicians joining in. There we had an open baptistry, filled and ready for use! We provided spare clothes for those wanting to be baptised. Most nights we baptised a few people, some coming prepared for that, and some choosing to do so on the night.

I received invitations to take teams overseas, especially to teach church leaders about renewal and revival. So from the nineties I travelled on ministry and mission trips with Meg and others to Ghana, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea as well as to renewal centres in England, Canada and America. I also taught leaders in the Philippines, Kenya, and the South Pacific. There we often saw local revival movements. The leaders and pastors wanted to learn about the Holy Spirit and revival.

The Renewal Fellowship hosted various mission teams visiting Brisbane. This included two dozen Aborigines from Elcho Island, 11 law students from the South Pacific, and six villagers from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu.

I invited a team of Aborigines from Elcho Island, because one of Australia's largest revival movements started there. Over two dozen of them paid their own fares to come to Brisbane for Pentecost weekend in 1993. We accommodated them at Trinity Theological College and held the meetings at Christian Outreach Centre.

I met an on-fire team of Pacific Island law students in Port Vila in 2002, and we hosted them in Brisbane for a month. Philip and Dhamkia George, keen supporters of the Renewal Fellowship, provided their accommodation.

In 2002 Philip and Dhamika bought a 'miracle house' with no money! They used it for the Kingdom. A lady they befriended bought two rental properties in Brisbane at that time as house prices were rising rapidly, and she sold them a couple of years later to reap huge

profits. She advised them to do the same, but they had no money for that.

“You’ve been kind to me,” she observed. “So I will lend you the \$10,000 deposit needed for a housing loan. Buy a rental property, and the rent will cover the loan repayments. Then when you sell it, return my money to me, without interest.”

They bought that house just in time to offer it to the mission team of Pacific islanders to stay freely for a month. When they sold it a couple of years later, they gained almost \$90,000, wiping out their debts and making more available for mission.

The team of eleven law students from their Christian Fellowship (CF) visited Australia for a month in November-December 2002 involved in outreach and revival meetings in many denominations and as well as in visiting home prayer groups. I drove them 6,000 kilometres in a 12-seater van, including a trip from Brisbane to Sydney and back to visit Hillsong. The team stayed in the ‘miracle house’ provided freely by Philip and Dhamika George, available for them just when needed. They also met and visited many of my family, in Brisbane as well as in Tamworth, Manila, Orange and Sydney – an easy way to combine meetings, touring and accommodation!

The team prayed for hundreds of people in over a dozen churches and home groups, and led worship at the daily 6am prayer group at Kenmore Baptist Church (following their own 5am daily prayer meeting in the house provided for them).

Our family also hosted a team of six from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu for a week in November 2006, on their way to join others for three weeks of mission with me in the Solomon Islands. They too led us in worship at the 6am daily prayer group at Kenmore Baptist, and participated in home groups and Sunday services.

By the early nineties I drew together renewal and revival reports from most denominations for my book *Church on Fire*. It includes articles from Aboriginal, Anglican, Baptist, Brethren, Catholic, Churches of Christ, Lutheran, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian ministers in Australia at that time (see Appendix). Those articles provided a kaleidoscope of renewal developments in Australia in the late twentieth century.

Then from 1993 I edited the *Renewal Journal*, supported by the Renewal Fellowship, published twice a year, now available on its web site.

During the late nineties, when I taught at the Christian Outreach Centre School of Ministries (Bible College), I invited pastors and leaders to meet together monthly for a prayer breakfast. Pastor Geoff and Ann Holdway initially hosted these at Garden City Christian Church and they continued for a couple of years. We also hosted them at the Christian Outreach Centre (now Citipointe) coffee shop. Various combined churches events grew from that relationship. We held some united rallies at Mansfield COC, including one on September 14, 2001, five days after the 9/11 attack in New York – so global needs became a strong focus for united prayer then. Later on these churches united in BrizNet for city-wide events including combined prayer gatherings in the City Hall and central locations.

## **Kenmore Baptist Church**

Our family moved from Corinda to the Kenmore area in 2001 after we bought land at Pullenvale nearby, so we began attending Kenmore Baptist Church (KBC). Strongly evangelical and open to the Spirit’s leading, the church had already outgrown its crowded premises under Ric Benson’s wise leadership and the capable ministry team.

The congregations often fill the 800 seat auditorium in the multiple services on Sundays.

Teams lead worship accompanied by a well prepared band, with attractive digital projection used for singing, DVD presentations, Scripture readings, and sermon notes.

The large pastoral team and enormous numbers of voluntary workers provide a huge range of ministries and services. A weekly bulletin, including sermon outlines, and a monthly magazine, keep everyone informed. The church's comprehensive web site said:

KBC could at present, best be described as contemporary, evangelical and biblically charismatic. The total congregation of the church is over 2000 and comes from some 75 different suburbs with about 750 of those in the Youth and Young Adult area. The attendance at services is upwards of 1400 each week. Some 800 people meet in small groups each week and the church ministers through over 35 different ministries. There are over 25 different nationalities present in the church as well as people from almost every denomination.

The church strongly emphasises contemporary worship and has a 100 member strong musical company called Directions, which specialises in contemporary singing, dance and drama. KBC is very strong in counselling and training (with over 60 quality courses offered to its people and other churches), and in sport with over 300 people in Netball Club and 120 people in the Soccer Club. KBC also provides significant consultancy to many churches each year in all areas of ministry. We continually praise God for our growing and effective ministry.”

As at Gateway Baptist, our family participated in voluntary ministries. Our grandchildren enjoyed the children's programs. Meg especially appreciated the love and care of the women's group she attended as her health declined. We held the memorial thanksgiving funeral service for Meg there in February 2002, with abundant flowers, wonderful musicians from the Kenmore and former Wesley congregations, and singers from college at Christian Outreach Centre.

In the midst of life we still face death. The Kingdom of God has come partially, not fully yet. So we continue to pray for the sick, and bury the dead. One day, every tear will be dried, but not yet.

KBC integrates renewal ministries into the general life of the church. Some home groups, especially among youth, actively use spiritual gifts including controversial ones like prophecy, healings, and revelatory gifts. The pastoral team has preached and taught about charismatic renewal, spiritual gifts, and empowering. Their training programs encourage people to grow in grace, such as through the Pathways courses.

They also participate actively in BrizNet, the combined churches organisation which leads Prayer Concerts and the annual city-wide 'Yes We Care' neighbourhood blitz of practical help for needy people. A huge range of ministries involve hundreds of people in local, national and overseas mission.

During the December-January vacation period of 2002-3, I led local inter-church renewal meetings at KBC on Saturday nights, the only night the facilities were free. We involved people from the Renewal Fellowship, including Hilary at the piano, and saw gentle touches of the Spirit in worship and prayer ministry, including healings. However, we soon realised that Saturday night posed problems. Most attending were actively involved in their churches on Sunday, leading, preaching, and teaching children or youth. Some had to be on deck for

early morning services such as 8am at Kenmore Baptist and 8.30am at Chapel Hill Uniting.

For many years Jesse Padayachee, has preached and prayed for people at monthly evening services at KBC. An Indian, originally from South Africa, Jesse is a strong healing evangelist based in Brisbane. He travels widely on mission, especially among indigenous communities. His services at KBC have often gone late as he and others pray for healing, deliverance, and other needs.

Ric and Ann Benson, with Jesse and Cookie Padayachee, led mission teams from KBC in Fiji and elsewhere, with strong evangelism and healing ministries. I've been blessed to be part of some of those teams, and have also involved Jesse in mission in the Solomon Islands.

The pastoral team actively encourages people to seek more of the Spirit's empowering in their lives, and they see many released in various gifts of the Spirit. All of this is strongly grounded in ministry to others in and beyond the church. Office staff regularly informs a very active email prayer group list of intercessors concerning any needs, also informing them of answered prayers and needs met.

Ray and Nan Peck head up the prayer counselling and inner healing ministries, training a steadily growing team to pray effectively for emotional and personal wholeness, including deliverance from oppression. They have taught this to leaders overseas as well, particularly in mission trips to Fiji. In 2002 they started a daily 6am prayer group for an hour in the church, Mondays to Fridays. I admired their dedication.

"If the Lord wakes me, I'll come," I joked with them. "I'm an owl, not a rooster."

Apparently the Lord appreciates sincere jokes. I began waking up around 5.30 a.m., and that was in mid-winter, dark and cold. So for around seven years I attended fairly regularly, never setting an alarm clock. I had to adjust my retiring time. Less TV!

Regular participants in that prayer group from its beginning included other foundation members of the church, Athol Alcorn and Gordon and Barbara Scorgie (in whose 'elastic-sided' home the church began), all retired and now some gone home to Glory. Others joined them, not only retirees. Some called in on their way to work. David and Ros Beduhn often attended, between their many mission trips to Papua New Guinea and India. The group prays faithfully for them, and for others also.

A revival ministry team from the South Pacific joined us in that early-morning prayer group twice during those years. I especially enjoyed that, as did others. Numbers attending swelled at those times. The first was the group of 11 law students here for a month on mission, now all lawyers and strong Christian leaders in South Pacific islands. The second was a team of six from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu, here for a week on their way to the Solomon Islands on revival mission. Both teams led us in worship and prayer, island style. Those sessions went for well over an hour, but it seemed like a few minutes.

Occasionally overseas visitors came to that prayer group, challenging our faith. That included people I have worked with such as Frank Nyameche from Kenya, Raju and Samita Sundras from Nepal, as well as the South Pacific university student team and the team from Vanuatu. The prayer group prayed faithfully for them and me, especially when I have been away on mission trips. Others prayed, especially Renewal Fellowship people, and I am truly grateful. I believe those prayers have been a significant part of the revival ministries I have seen and been involved with as I visited many nations.

By mid-2017 Kenmore Baptist Church had outgrown their crowded buildings in Kenmore and they relocated as Riverlife Baptist Church into large premises in Seventeen Mile Rocks near the Brisbane River and Rocks River Park. Their staff and ministries continue to multiply.

## Chapter 8

### Revival: begin with 1 2 3



*Revival ministries:* Burmese leaders conference in Thailand, Geoff prays with orphans and leaders in Kenya, South Pacific mission team in Brisbane

Revival is God pouring out his Spirit, abundantly. It may start small, with 1, 2 or 3 converts, but escalates to 100, 200 or 300 and more. It may explode with 1,000, 2,000 or 3,000 as on the Day of Pentecost, or with millions as in national revivals. Revival impacts vast numbers of people, changes communities, and stirs up opposition, such as Jesus faced.

Significantly, Jesus explained that the Holy Spirit coming upon him powerfully equipped him for his mission. He then faced tough opposition. The devil tried to stop him. Jesus totally resisted that opposition. Personal appetites, vainglory, or presumption did not divert him.

“He is out of his mind,” his family said. They tried to stop him. Pharisees and Herodians, the religious and state leaders, plotted to kill him. The Gospels describe these strong reactions to Jesus as early as Mark 3:6, 21-22, 32.

He survived many assassination attempts. Two kings wanted to kill him (Matthew 2:13; Luke 13:31). His relatives attempted to push him over a cliff (Luke 4:29). People in Jerusalem tried to stone him more than once (John 8:59, 10:31). Leaders plotted to kill him many times (Matthew 12:14, 26:4; Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47).

Eventually they did kill him. But Jesus chose the time and the place (John 10:17-18). I knew that the message of the cross is the power of God for everyone being saved (1 Corinthians 1:18). I didn’t realise how powerful it is for life now, as well as for hereafter.

The cross is the heart of revival. In revival God pours out his Spirit powerfully with salvation, healing, deliverance and community transformation. As I travelled I saw many examples of local revivals. Invitations came to teach leaders about revival, although I felt more like a learner than a teacher. Pastors and leaders appreciated receiving resources such as the Transformation videos and DVDs and my book *Flashpoints of Revival* (1998, second edition 2009). My book *Journey into Mission* (2018) expands this chapter in this book.

I had the great privilege of travelling with various teams, especially from the Renewal Fellowship, to visit many countries to encourage pastors and leaders. Many of those people overseas face difficulties and persecution we do not. Travelling in mission teams with some of them, as in Africa, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and China, gave us small glimpses of the challenges they face and their simple, strong faith. It reminded me of Luke and others travelling with Paul, as Luke describes in the ‘we’ passages of Acts 16, 20-21, and 27-28.

We Westerners believe in Jesus and live for him, but I found overseas Christians and leaders generally more responsive to the Lord and his Spirit, more aware of the spirit realm, and more convinced that Jesus’ ministry and New Testament life still happen now just as it did then. They are more likely to pray as the early church did, “In the name of Jesus, be healed.” They bind and cast out spirits more than we do!

They expect signs and wonders more than we do, and pray for God’s supernatural intervention amid opposition like the early church Christians: “*Now Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus*” (Acts 4:29-30). Christians in other cultures also seem far less distracted than we are by media such as TV and DVDs. That applied to Australian Aborigines also, although media now increasingly bombard them as well. We may know far more about our own culture’s gods, such as Hollywood and singing idols, than we do about Peter, Paul and Mary!

However, there’s hope for us too, if we, like them, will humble ourselves and pray, and seek God’s face and turn from our wicked ways. God promises to hear from heaven his dwelling place, forgive our sin, and heal the land.

## Australia



We invited a team of Aborigines from Elcho Island near Darwin to come to Brisbane for Pentecost weekend in 1993. The Uniting Church on Elcho Island experienced strong revival from March 1979, led by their pastor, Djiniyini Gondarra, now Rev Dr (photo).

He described it this way: “In that same evening the word just spread like the flames of fire and reached the whole community in Galiwin’ku. Gelung and I couldn’t sleep at all that night because people were just coming for the ministry, bringing the sick to be prayed for, for healing. Others came to bring their problems. Even a husband and wife came to bring their marriage problem, so the Lord touched them and healed their marriage.

Many unplanned and unexpected things happened every time we went from camp to camp to meet with the people. The fellowship was held every night and more and more people gave their lives to Christ, and it went on and on until sometimes the fellowship meeting would end around about midnight. There was more singing, testimony, and ministry going on. People did not feel tired in the morning, but still went to work.”

It sparked revival in aboriginal communities and churches across the north and west of Australia, so I wanted them to share with us in Brisbane. Two dozen came and we housed them at Trinity Theological College in the students’ dormitories. They found the beds too soft but enjoyed sleeping on the carpeted floor!

We held the meetings at Christian Outreach Centre, in their large auditorium offered freely to us. Although we began in the seats, we soon found ourselves sitting on the floor on and around the large platform and its steps, talking and praying together aboriginal style. They sang, gave testimonies and spoke, in simple, clear ways. They surprised me when they told me that it was the first time they had been invited to lead meetings in a white congregation!

“We don’t know how to pray for white people,” they said. “We haven’t done that before.” I had asked them to pray for people at the end of each meeting.

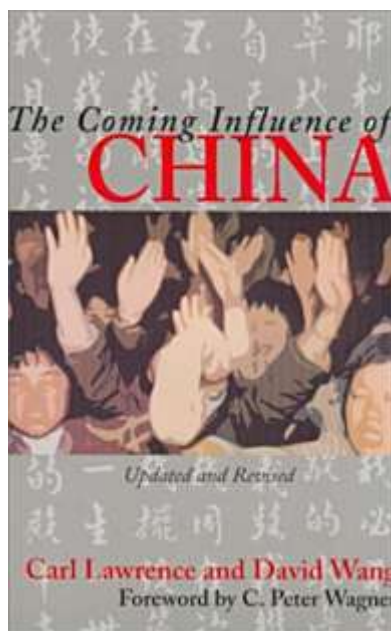
“Just pray for us the same way you do for your own people,” I suggested. They did. We sat with them on the floor, talked together and then prayed for one another.

They invited us to join them on Elcho Island the following March, 1994, for their anniversary celebrations of the beginning of the revival. A small team of us flew there as guests, attending and enjoying the meetings and friendship. Although the initial intensity of the revival had died down, the meetings and community still carried the warmth, vitality and improved social conditions brought by the revival. You can read about that revival on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com) in the first issue - *Renewal Journal: Revival*.

Aboriginal pastors and leaders spoke at the meetings, celebrating what God had done among them. I had the honour to speak one night, gladly thanking them for their God-given national leadership in revival, so needed by the rest of us in Australia.

Some of us visited a small community, driving 50 kilometres on 4WD dirt tracks to the north end of the long narrow island. That community had one trade store, a single room school and a church. The whole community of about 30 people prayed together every morning and night, especially for revival in Australia. They saw prayers answered among their own people, and continued to pray daily for the nation. I found it a holy, humbling time to pray with them.

## China



One of my most humbling and stirring experiences of revival happened in China where Christians have been severely persecuted for over half a century, and it is still illegal to hold unregistered meetings, free of government control and restrictions.

I loved it there among such humble, hungry, receptive, grateful, gentle and faith filled believers. I was often in tears just being there, appreciating their heartfelt zeal in everything. I have rarely been so impressed anywhere. No concerts. No acting. No hype. Just bare essentials. What a big and wonderful family we belong to, and our Father is so proud of his family there, I'm sure.

I had the great honour of speaking at a house church. People arrived in ones or twos over an hour or so, and stayed for many hours. Then they left quietly in ones or twos again, just personal visitors to that host family. Food on the small kitchen table welcomed everyone, some brought by visitors.

About 30 of us crowded into a simple room with very few chairs. Most sat on the thin mat coverings. They sang their own heartfelt worship songs in their own language and style, pouring out love to the Lord, sometimes with tears. The leader played a very basic guitar in a very basic way.

Everyone listened intently to the message, and gladly asked questions, all of it interpreted. There was no need for an altar call or invitation to receive prayer. Everyone wanted personal prayer. Our prayer team of three or four people prayed over each person for specific needs such as healing and with personal prophecies. That flowed strongly. I knew none of that group, but received 'pictures' or words of encouragement for each one, as did the others.

While prayer continued, some began slipping quietly away. Others had supper. Others stayed to worship quietly. It was a quiet night because they did not want to disturb neighbours or attract attention.

Most people in that group were new believers with no Christian background at all. They identified easily with the house churches of the New Testament, the persecution, and the miracles, because they experienced all that as well. Many unbelievers become Christians because someone prayed for their healing and the Lord healed them.

Afterwards, some of us drove to a local park just to pray with an elderly gentleman, unable to go to the meetings. He thanked us so eloquently for coming to his country to support and encourage his people. I was deeply moved. So much personal support, encouragement and evangelism happen that way, so simply.

It neither looked nor sounded like a Western revival! It wasn't. Yet it was part of one of the greatest revivals of the last half century, bringing over 100 million into the Kingdom of God. Carl Lawrence and David Wang tell about that revival in their book, *The Coming Influence of China*. "The Spirit told us what to do", an article reproduced from the book with links on [www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com), tells of two teenage girls starting 30 churches in a few years amid strong opposition.



## Philippines



Dr Charles Ringma invited me to teach graduate subjects at the Asian Theological Seminary in Manila in the Philippines where he taught. Charles and his wife Rita also worked with Servants Mission, managing their guest house and headquarters. I had known them in Brisbane when they were the inaugural directors of Teen Challenge in Australia.

So I stayed with Servants Mission and found my way to the seminary on hot, crowded Jeepneys, adapted from the popular army jeeps with passengers sitting side-saddle, or standing and crouching. Most Jeepneys sported brightly coloured religious texts and slogans – *God is with us, Jesus is Lord, God is love, Hallelujah, Blessed Virgin*, and hundreds more.

I taught M.Th. subjects during the June vacations in 1994 on Revival History and in 1995 on Signs and Wonders, and visited huge churches in Manila. My assistant lecturer invited me to a church he had established. People there responded quickly, loved praying for one another, and expected healing and miracles.

A student in our class invited me to her home to pray for her sick daughter. The little girl slept on her mattress on the floor, so I just rested my hand on her and prayed. She slept on. Next day her mum brought her to enjoy our air conditioned classroom, happy and healthy.

During the class seminars, my students reported on various signs and wonders that they had experienced in their churches. Many of them expected God to do the same things now as he did in the New Testament, but not all!

“We don’t seem to have miracles in our church,” said one student, a part-time Baptist pastor and police inspector.

“You could interview a pastor from a church that does,” I suggested.

So he interviewed a Pentecostal pastor about miraculous answers to prayer in their church. That student reported to the class how the Pentecostal church sent a team of young people to the local mental hospital for monthly meetings where they sang and witnessed and prayed for people. Over 40 patients attended their first meeting there, and they prayed for 26 personally, laying hands on them. A month later, when they returned for their next meeting, all those 26 patients had been discharged and sent home.

In Manila I joined the team of Servants Mission in their guesthouse base. They worked with the poor in the slums and most lived in the slums with the people they served. They lived simply, identifying with the people, trusting God for his supernatural intervention in personal and social needs. I found it moving and challenging to visit the slum homes where Dorothy Mathieson and Judy Marsh from Gateway Baptist lived and worked. Conditions there in the slums made the rest of Manila look luxurious, even with the city’s regular electrical brown-outs, jammed telephones, cracked and gritty streets, and badly broken road drainage awash with sewerage in heavy rains.

Following my return from Manila in 1995, Meg and I travelled on round-the-world tickets to Ghana, England and Canada. That was the cheapest way to visit Ghana in West Africa on mission. There we saw even more miracles.

## Ghana



We drove, for over an hour in torrential rain to our first evening open-air crusade meeting in Ghana, West Africa. Our hosts from a small independent church, co-operated with other local churches for these meetings. As the guest speaker, on my first visit to Africa, I wondered why the meetings had not been switched from the market area to a church building with a roof. They explained that they always held crusade meetings outside in the market area where the people gathered. *But what about the rain?* I wondered.

We arrived at the mountain town of Suhum in the dark. Torrential rain had cut off the electricity supply. The rain eased off a bit, so we gathered in the market area and prayed

“Lord God, you are mighty,” I prayed. “You take over and do what you alone can do.”

Soon the rain ceased. The town’s electricity came on. The host team began excitedly shouting that it was a miracle.

“We will talk about this for years,” they exclaimed with gleaming eyes. And we had not even started the first meeting yet! We had clear skies all that week.

I asked them again why they planned outdoor meetings in the monsoon season. They told me that if I could only come at that time, then they trusted God to work it all out. Soon the musicians from one of the local churches had plugged in their instruments to the sound system. The loudspeakers did not face the faithful Christians gathered in the fluorescent-lit open area, but pointed at the surrounding houses, the stores, and the hotel.

My interpreter that night didn’t know English really well. I think he preached his own sermon based on some phrases of mine he understood or guessed, and apparently he did well. When we invited people to respond and give their lives to Christ, they came from the surrounding darkness into the light. Some wandered over from the pub, smelling of beer. They kept the ministry team busy praying and arranging follow-up with their churches.

I moved about laying hands on people’s heads and praying for them, as did many others. People reported various touches of God in their lives. Some were healed. Later that week an older man excitedly told how he had come to the meeting that night almost blind but now he could see clearly.



Each day we held morning worship and teaching sessions for Christians in the Apostolic Church, hot under an iron roof on those clear, tropical sunny days. During the third morning I vividly ‘saw’ golden light fill the church and swallow up or remove blackness. At that point the African Christians became very noisy, vigorously celebrating and shouting praises to God. A fresh anointing seemed to fall on them just then.

Although it didn’t rain the whole time we were holding meetings there, the day after our meetings finished, the torrential rains began again. The following week we saw floods in Ghana reported on international television. Later on we received letters telling us how the church where we held our morning meetings had grown, expanded their building, and had sent out teams of committed young people in evangelism. Through that experience, God showed us a glimpse of what he is doing in a big way in the earth right now.

## Toronto



Since the mid-nineties Toronto and Pensacola became famous in revival literature. The Lord poured out his Spirit in amazing ways in both these cities, modern echoes of the radical Azusa Street revival in 1906, ninety years earlier. Hundreds of thousands have visited both places, discovering fresh touches from God.

After our week on mission in Ghana, Meg and I explored England and Wales for a week, visiting revival locations, then flew on to Toronto in Canada. We spent a memorable week at Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (TACF).

The senior pastors at TACF, John and Carol Arnott (photo), had prayed earnestly for over a year, dedicating every morning to seeking God together and personally. Randy Clark, a fellow Vineyard pastor, joined them for revival meetings from January 20, 1994, at their small church building at the end of the international airport runway. The Spirit moved on them all in unusual and controversial ways. People fell to the floor, most overwhelmed for hours, laughing, trembling, weeping, and celebrating. TACF saw more people transformed by God, including conversions, than they had ever seen before. Over 100,000 a year flocked there from all over the world for well over a decade.

The wide diversity of people from different denominations and countries there impressed us. Visiting pastors and leaders in these revival meetings confess their sins of control, pride, theological rigidity, jealousy and fear of people's opinions. Many are reconciled and work publicly together for God's glory, not for the glory of their own denomination or theology. Churches which once competed, blamed others for sheep stealing and criticised each other, have confessed their sins of division and hatred, found reconciliation and an astonishing love for one another. Many of them now co-operate to minister this blessing together

We joined the crowds of over 1500 each morning and night, enjoyed the low-key sensitive worship (knowing very few of their songs), appreciated the balanced teaching, and received personal prayer.

Both of us appreciated the gracious, caring way people prayed for us, and others. No rush. No hype. No pressure. Whether we stood, or sat in a chair, or rested on the carpeted floor, those praying for us did so quietly with prayers prompted by the Holy Spirit. Those praying laid a hand on us gently, as led, and trusted the Lord to touch us. He did. Warmth and love permeated us. We returned to our hotel after the meetings aware of increased peace and deeper assurance of the Lord's love and grace.

Our visit included a day's bus trip to Niagara Falls. It seemed like a parable of God pouring out his Spirit in abundance. We stood in the tunnel lookout under the roaring wall of water, and sailed through the spray below the falls in the Maid of the Mist ferry. Niagara Falls reminded us of our awesome creator and provided a time of refreshing in another way.

After returning to Brisbane I noticed that people I prayed for received strong touches from the Lord, most resting in the Spirit on the floor. We needed people to be ready to catch those who fell, to avoid them getting hurt (then needing extra healing prayer!). Some of them had visions of the Lord blessing them and others. Many people from many denominations came to our meetings and found renewal, refreshment and empowering.

## Pensacola



My next round-the-world ticket, also in the June-July vacation, took me to England, visiting relatives, and then on to Pensacola in Florida in the south east of the United States in 2002. Security was exceptionally tight after the 9/11 attacks in America the previous September. We had to remove shoes, belts, and empty our pockets as we progressed slowly through two or three x-ray checks in each boarding queue.

I flew to New Orleans from Miami, drove a rental Ford Escort over 200 miles to Brownsville in Pensacola on the southern coast, found the church and booked into a nearby motel. Local accommodation and tourist businesses profited greatly from the thousands visiting that Brownsville revival in Pensacola!

Lightning hit the main church auditorium building on July 4 (their national holiday!) the previous week, knocking out their electrical system. So we met in their new octagonal Family Worship Centre seating 2000, built for revival overflow crowds. I attended their Wednesday to Friday night meetings. They sounded much the same as any Assemblies of God service at home, but with a wonderful, powerful presence of God, hard to describe, but easy to soak in.

I liked the spontaneous bits best. Before Friday night's revival service some people in the singing group of over 50 people on the stage began singing free harmonies without music while they waited for the sound system to work, and we all joined in. It sounded like angels harmonising in continual worship. Wonderful. No need for words!

Later, during the service Lindel Cooley (top photo right), their worship leader, led spontaneously from the keyboard without other instruments, singing the chorus of an old hymn from his youth (and mine) – 'Love lifted me'. All the oldies joined in, and then it went on to a verse sung from memory. It moved me deeply, from my own boyhood memories, especially as I had just then been asking the Lord for a personal word or touch from him.

A visitor preached, calling for faith and action. Their prayer team prayed for many hundreds at the 'altar call' – short and sharp, but relevant and challenging. The man who prayed briefly for me spoke about national and international ministries the Lord would open for me.

The Pensacola style of revival felt more strongly Pentecostal than the Vineyard renewal style at Toronto, but both were saturated with the powerful presence of the Lord. That wonderful presence touched me most.



The Pensacola congregation had been praying earnestly for revival before it began on Father's Day, June 18, 1995. Evangelist Steve Hill (photo) spoke that day and a thousand people streamed forward at the altar call. John Kilpatrick the pastor (top photo left), was overwhelmed for four days. They registered over 26,000 conversions in the first year of that revival and over 100,000 in the first two years. Thousands of lives were dramatically changed. It spilled out into the community with crime and abortions dropping significantly.

## Kenya



I met Francis Nyameche, a youth evangelist from Kenya, when he studied for his Bachelor of Ministry degree in Brisbane, graduating in 2000. Since then I've visited him in Kenya a few times.

His father, Samson Nyameche, founded the Believers Fellowship Church in Kisumu, Kenya, with 2000 involved, and he established over 30 churches in scattered villages. He runs an orphanage for 50 children on his family farm.

Frank had a vision of Jesus when he was five, and was powerfully filled with the Spirit as a teenager. He became the youth pastor in his father's church and spoke at local markets where hundreds were saved and Spirit-filled. Frank evangelized in many places in Africa.

Supported by his wife Linda, Frank began Nairobi Believers Mission (NBM) church in the slums of Kibera, Nairobi, where a million people live, jammed together in small mud brick homes with rusty iron roofs. I've had the privilege of teaching leaders and speaking at meetings there. In spite of poverty and political unrest, their churches continue to grow steadily.

Before the Kibera slum church moved into their corrugated iron shed they met in a community hall. I taught leaders there, and spoke at their Sunday service with about 30 people. We gave them real bread for communion, not just symbolic cubes. The Spirit led me to give them all the bread we had, just a couple of loaves (not five barley buns as the boy had in Scripture).

"Can I take some home to my family?" asked one young man. That's a hard question to answer in front of 30 hungry people.

"You can take some of your own communion bread home if you want to," I answered.

Then everyone took a large handful of communion bread, and most put some in their pockets to take home later. We shared real glasses of grape juice in plastic glasses, thanking the Lord for his body and blood given for us.

After my return to Australia I heard that the bread apparently multiplied, as those who took some home had enough for their families to eat for a few weeks.

Francis added: "Actually the miracle continued months after we began NBM and were feeding members each Saturday afternoon with tea and bread. God continued multiplying the food and there was always enough."



My glimpses of revival in Kenya with Francis in the slums, with his parents in the orphanage, and teaching pastors and leaders from over 30 of their churches, reminded me that God uses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty.

People with limited or no resources still see the Kingdom of God come powerfully among them.

## Nepal



Our friends Bob and Jill Densley from the Renewal Fellowship worked with the United Nations in Nepal for a few years. They encouraged many pastors there, most with small house churches, facing hostile opposition. We worked most with pastors Raju and Rinzi (photo). Holding church meetings in Nepal was illegal until the 1990's. Most pastors have been imprisoned, many of them severely beaten.

During several visits to Nepal from 1996, usually with a team from the Renewal Fellowship visiting and working with Bob and Jill, we had meetings in Kathmandu the capital, in East Nepal with Bhutan refugees and churches, and in Maoist dominated West Nepal.

During some meetings in West Nepal, we walked the 20 minutes from our accommodation cabins to the church, past unfriendly or suspicious villagers. The two pastors sent to collect us in a jeep took another route and missed us. They panicked, thinking we had been abducted. After that they insisted that we wait to be collected each time!

In Kathmandu, on that same visit, we stayed in a Buddhist retreat house, because that was a safer location than hotels we had used previously. Some hotels had been bombed. Even in that Buddhist 'safe house' we had a night watchman on duty all night. He walked around tapping his stick loudly so that nearby soldiers would not mistake him for a terrorist!

Pastor Raju Sundras organized most of our visits. We first met him as a young evangelist who had already been imprisoned and beaten severely many times. Raju, with his wife Samita, began Hosanna Church in Kathmandu which grew to over 800 by 2009, one of the large churches in the nation. Each time we visited them we found they had expanded their premises. They planted other churches in Nepal, Tibet, India, and refugee communities from Bhutan and networked with 240 churches by 2009. Ten years ago it took a decade to add 100 people to a church. That now happens in six months or less.

Their church prays. A lot. We visited their 24-hour upper room where many of their people went to fast and pray. They believe in miracles, and see many. They now run schools which have won government awards, and they have trade schools to prepare apprentices for work. Their outreaches include feeding hundreds of street children in their Jesus Kitchen.



We saw many leaders filled with the Spirit, many people healed, and many gifts of the Spirit poured out, including revelations and visions. I heard a young man in East Nepal, and an older man in Kathmandu, both pray eloquently in English, although neither of them spoke English. That was a beautiful gift of tongues, which blessed me profoundly.

Here is Raju's report of our team visit at Easter 2000:

It was a great blessing from the Lord to send us a team from Australia mid-April. The fellowship, the Word from God, the mighty touch of the Holy Spirit, the love of Christ flourishing from our Australian brothers and sisters, the awesome presence of the Lord throughout the rushing schedule of conferences, trips, and visits, overwhelmingly expressed the great love of our Lord Jesus Christ towards this nation. During the short stay of about two weeks with the team of eight people we had the privilege to see the ministry of the Holy Spirit through them in several occasions.

Some of the group along with me had a short trip to the Tibetan border. We started early morning and arrived there about noon time. The towns of Liping on the Nepali side and Khawsa on the Tibetan side are connected through a bridge on Bhotekoshi river and right in the midst of the bridge is the border white line showing the boundary of each country. At the end of the bridge on the Tibetan side is the entry gate which is controlled by Chinese guards and immigration officials.

After praying on the bridge we approached the Chinese officials to get a permission to enter Tibet. The first official refused but the second one nodded approvingly, taking the four Australian passports from my hand as security, and let us go free of charge! This could happen only by the supernatural intervention of our Almighty God, Hallelujah! We had good prayer inside Tibet especially on those individual shopkeepers whom I would grab and pray on without any resistance from them!

On 21 April all the eight Australians and I had a trip to Gochadda in west Nepal and held a three days conference over there at Easter. While driving toward the destination I shared the Word with the driver of the private bus and during the inauguration of the conference he approached the altar and accepted Christ as his personal Saviour. On the same day a Christian brother whose hand was partially crippled for six years was touched by the Holy Spirit and healed absolutely. He was shaking in his whole body and raising his hands, even the crippled one already healed, praising the Lord with all his strength, he glorified the Lord for his greatness, Hallelujah!

Out of about 200 participants in the conference by the grace of God 100 of them were baptized in the Holy Spirit praising the Lord, singing, falling, crying, and many other actions as the Holy Spirit would prompt them to act. About ten of them testified that they had never experienced such a presence of the power and love of God. Some others testified being lifted to heavenly realms by the power of the Holy Spirit, being surrounded by the angels of the Lord in a great peace, joy, and love toward each other and being melted in the power of his presence. Many re-committed their lives to the Lord for ministry by any means through his revelation.

On the second day of the conference the trend continued as the people seemingly would fall down, repent, minister to each other in the love of Christ, enjoy the mighty touch of the Holy Spirit, singing, prophesying, weeping, laughing, hugging, and all the beauty of the Holy Spirit was manifested throughout the congregation by his grace and love. One woman

of age 65 testified that she never had danced in her life in any occasion even in secret, but the Lord had told her that she should now dance to him and she was dancing praising him with all her strength. For hours this outpouring continued and the pastors of the churches were one by one testifying that they had never experienced such a presence and power of God in their whole Christian life and ministry.

Some 60 evangelists from Gorkha, Dhanding, Chitwan, Butwal declared that they were renewed in their spirits by the refreshing of the Holy Spirit and they are now going to serve the Lord in the field wherever the Holy Spirit will lead them to be full-fledged in His service. In the last day of the conference while praying together with the congregation and committing them in his hands, many prophesied that the Lord was assuring them of great changes in their ministry, life and the area. While the power of God was at work in our midst three children of 6-7 years old fell down weeping, screaming and testifying about a huge hand coming on them and touching their stomachs and healing them instantly. After the prayer all the participants got into the joy of the Holy Spirit and started dancing to the Lord, singing and praising Him for His goodness.

Before leaving Gochadda while we were having snacks in the pastor's house a woman of high Brahmin caste came by the direction of the Lord to the place, claiming that she was prompted by a voice in her ear to go to the Christians and ask for prayer for healing of her chronic stomach pain and problems, and that is why she was there. We prayed for her and she was instantly healed and we shared the Gospel, but she stopped us saying, "I need to accept Christ as my Saviour so don't waste time!"

She accepted Jesus as her personal Saviour being lifted in spirit, and even the body as she said she didn't feel anymore burden in her body, and spirit, Hallelujah!

On 25 April we held another conference in Nazarene Church pastored by Rinzi Lama in Kathmandu. Ten churches unitedly participated in the two days gathering where about 100 people participated. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit continued in this conference refreshing many in their spirits and bringing much re-commitment. Some cases of healing were testified. In one case the brother testified that he had received healing from the Lord and his swollen feet and the high Uric Acid had disappeared from his body, confirmed by the Holy Spirit.

We showed the Transformation video brought from Australia. All committed themselves for constant prayer to bring transformation to their cities too by God's power.

On 27 April we held a one day conference in Hosanna Church where the touch of the Holy Spirit was tremendous and people blessed by the Holy Spirit and his might were manifesting his power and presence in the place. While people were worshipping and praising the Lord, a prophecy came and the Lord said, "What happened to the vision given to you six years ago? You have forgotten to pray about it but I have not forgotten what I have promised to you through the vision!"

I was reminded by the Holy Spirit that I had seen a vision where I was taken over the highest



mountains in this country with a few of my foreign friends and some of our evangelists and as we put our step on the top of the mountain it started shaking and melting and my friends and the evangelists started disappearing, then I cried out, "Lord where are my friends?" And He said open your eyes and see, and I saw all my friends and the evangelists were scattered all over the mountains and they were coming towards me with multitudes of people behind them. I started weeping and with a feeling which words cannot explain I was thanking the Lord for His goodness, I was laughing in the Spirit for the repetition of the vision which I could see again. Hallelujah!

I have to thank the Lord for His great outpouring of the Holy Spirit and I have to thank the Lord also for my Australian brothers and sisters who took up the burden to come over to this place and minister to our people.

Raju also reported on further developments the next year:

During the past two months in 2001 we have experienced a new wave of outpouring of the Spirit on the congregation. Many instant healings of people suffering from fever, flu, unconsciousness, blood discharge, boils and tumours, stomach problems, chronic headaches. The fame of the healings in the Church has reached many unbelievers through the congregation and numbers of unbelievers are coming to seek the healing, most of them ending up saved!

The Church is growing rapidly in the Spirit, many standing in faith are experiencing prosperity, good health, spiritual satisfaction, close intimacy with the Lord and moreover a hunger and thirst along with zeal of God to know Jesus intimately and to do his will whatever it may cost. This new wave of revival in the Church is another assurance from the Lord that in the days ahead he has got great and marvellous plans to be revealed and carried out by the people he has called to fulfil his purposes.

This revival is quite a new movement of God in the Church and the leadership of the Church is waiting on the Lord to receive revelation if there is anything to be done or just let it grow to maturity as it is growing by the Holy Spirit. Since the start of the year 2001 the leadership of the Church is busy to pray on almost every individual of the Church for receiving the gifts of the Spirit as well as counselling them in the Word and praying with them at the time of need.

In December 2007 the Prime Minister invited Raju to speak at a nationally televised Christmas Day service in their International Stadium. Hosanna Church musicians led the 2,500 people there in singing their Nepalese version of Carols by Candlelight, as they held their candles: *Happy Birthday to You, Happy Birthday to You, Happy Birthday to Jesus, Happy Birthday to You.*

The following year in 2008, for the first time in Nepal's history, the government proclaimed December 25-26 a national public holiday.

## India

Following visits to Nepal, Meg and I, with a team from the Renewal Fellowship, visited majestic Darjeeling in the Himalayas and crowded New Delhi in the dry plains of India (with a day's tourist visit to the Taj Mahal). Then we flew on to Sri Lanka's luscious green mountains. In every place we saw people touched by God in many ways, especially being filled with the Spirit and healed. They had strong, simple faith.

## Darjeeling



Rev Dr David Mangratee hosted our visits to Darjeeling. A gracious, pioneering Apostle in the Himalaya mountains, David said our visits opened new doors for him to work among all the churches. People from many churches joined together for our meetings on renewal and revival.

David's congregation at Mt Hermon had experienced revival, rapid growth, and had launched missions to remote regions. David translated my book *Flashpoints of Revival* into Nepalese, adding his reports of his involvement in revival, as part of his doctoral studies. Here is part of his reports about previous revivals:

Revival broke out in Darjeeling in 1960. The person God used in this great revival was Rev. David Mangratee. Born into a Hindu family, I had a wonderful birth. I asked the Lord, when I had a vision of the Lord, whether my father had died before he was born and had lived again, for I was told by my parents that my father died in the year 1933. He was to be taken for burial. People had made everything ready. He was kept inside the coffin ready for taking him the burial place. But before they could take him he woke up and lived again.

After this my father lived for another 20 years and died again in 1953 never to rise again. During my vision I asked the Lord whether this was true. The Lord answered, "Yes, because I wanted a man with a miracle birth."

It was God's great grace that He raised me for this great work which one can see at present among the Nepalese. I accepted the Lord as my personal saviour on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1953, just 63 days after the death of my father. I underwent a Bible Training Programme at Southern Asia Bible Institute (now College) and returned to Darjeeling. We started a church in Darjeeling with 35 newly converted people.

On Pentecost Sunday in the month of May, 1960, one of our church members got filled with the Spirit of God. She spoke in tongues and prophesied. Then in the month of June that same year the Holy Spirit came upon the believers mightily. They were filled with the Spirit of God and God blessed them with gifts of the Spirit, especially the word of

wisdom and the word of knowledge. By this, lost money was found, lost souls traced, sick healed and sin uncovered.

Many miracles took place in the ministry, even raising the dead. The work faced a lot of opposition in the beginning but the changed lives of the first Christians made their mouths shut. Many national missionaries are working now in Nepal or Bhutan and different parts of India like Assam, Manipur and Nagaland. The Nepalese, among whom our major work was concentrated, and also tribes like Bodos, Santhals, Nagas, Rajbansis, and many other tribal people, got saved.

“I will send even greater revival than before,” the Lord said. The revival continues. We are praying to him who in a covenant keeping God.

## **New Delhi**

Our team from the Renewal Fellowship visited Grace Bible College and orphanage near New Delhi, India’s capital. Dr Paul Pilai and his family pioneered India Inland Mission, sending out thousands of evangelists and pastors across India. Their Bible College, the largest in India, has 600 students studying under-graduate and post-graduate courses, with 200 evangelists sent out each year.

I had the humbling honour to speak to their students, and also pray with the staff. Most of their graduates face hostile communities as they plant churches in Hindu villages and towns. We heard about two of their graduates shot dead in Nepal when we held our meetings in West Nepal in 1998.

I first met Paul Pilai when he stayed in our community home while he spoke at churches in Brisbane. Paul had been a young Hindu lawyer, converted when healed through prayer in Jesus’ name. He told us how he and his evangelism team had once been severely beaten by radical Hindus who broke his arm and tried to kill them all. God intervened. By the firelight of their burning tent, the team saw themselves surrounded by handsome men who moved them to a safe place, miraculously. Those angels said, “God will send you back here again.”

He did. Later on a man from that area invited them back to hold meetings in his home. That became the beginning of a church there.

Paul gave this report of challenges facing their graduates of Grace Bible College:

Manoharpur, where Australian missionary Robert Stains and his two sons were killed by burning them alive in their vehicle, is seeing a mighty revival. Thousands of tribal people are coming to Christ. Several of our teams are using the ‘Jesus’ movie all over that area where Bajrang Dal killers are brought in from outside that area to attack Christians. Killing of Christians may continue in that area, but the prayer of saints all over the world is making a change. Many Bajrang Dal killers also are coming to know Christ in miraculous ways.

Our churches in Kashmir are suffering much as the war is raging there between India and Bin Laden’s high tech Islamic ‘Mujahideen’ (holy warriors) with Pakistan as their base. With Chinese technology, and enormous amounts of Arab money, Pakistan and Afghan terrorists believe that there should be a nuclear war in South Asia for the conquest by Islamic terrorists as an ‘historic Jihad’ as a final holy war to wipe out Christianity. This big blow

to Christian work in Kashmir will affect us for a long time to come.

Two of our Grace Bible College graduates working in Rukum district in Nepal were shot dead by the Hindu police for baptising Hindus in Nepal. Secret attacks are still going on while thousands are coming to Christ all over Nepal. More than 42 leading evangelistic organisations organised and directed by Grace Bible College graduates are working all over Nepal today.

Today there are more than 2,000 believers worshipping in different house churches in Bhutan secretly. Having an open border with India, Indian Christians are the only missionaries there. No church buildings are allowed in Bhutan. Many students graduated from our Bible College are working in Bhutan. This Himalayan foothill kingdom needs the Gospel desperately, and we need your continuous prayer and support for this strategic ministry.

## **Sri Lanka**

I taught Philip and Dhamika George, at Trinity Theological College. They came from Sri Lanka where Philip's brothers and sister are pastors, prayerfully supported by their godly parents. Philip and Dhamika, based in Brisbane, have raised many thousands of dollars for mission, especially in Sri Lanka. They invest in God's Kingdom, and see miracles continually.

I conducted their miracle wedding in Brisbane. It cost them nothing. Not only did they have no minister's fees, but also the church, the flowers, the bridal party's clothes, the banquet, and the wedding video all came free, without them asking for any of it! Philip earned money while a student by cleaning St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, a beautiful, gothic church in the heart of Brisbane city. So they offered him the church for the wedding. The people arranging flowers for the Sunday service the next day made it special for the wedding also. A student friend's mother owned a clothing boutique, and donated all the bridal party's outfits, normally rented or bought. Philip boarded at the Salvation Army hostel near the college, so they gladly provided the smorgasbord wedding breakfast for 100 people. Another friend offered to video their wedding. Imagine the family's surprise when they saw that video in Sri Lanka.

They also provided their 'miracle' rental house freely to a mission team from the South Pacific for a month. They bought that house with no money, just a generous loan from a lady they befriended, and sold it two years later for a large profit, used to wipe out all their debts and contribute more to missions.

Teams from the Renewal Fellowship visited Sri Lanka with Philip and Dhamika, staying with their family and relatives, speaking in their relatives' churches and local Bible Schools, and praying with their people.

We had the privilege of dedicating a spring water bottling factory built on their land there, supplied by a fresh mountain spring on their property. That provided income for their relatives' ministries in their churches and Bible Schools.

In spite of ethnic war with the Tamils and many Buddhist threats against churches and pastors, God moves strongly in the nation. Some of Philip's relatives have been taken to court, imprisoned, and had bomb threats, but they continue to trust God and serve him.

## Vanuatu

I flew to Port Vila in Vanuatu in the South Pacific for a holiday in September 2002. There I met leaders of the Christian Fellowship (CF) at the Law School. The CF presented a long, lively concert the Saturday night of my visit, so I went. Then I discovered that they planned to take a mission team to Australia. I offered to host them in Brisbane.

The University of the South Pacific, based in Suva Fiji, has its School of Law in Vanuatu (because of the unique combination of French, English and local laws in Vanuatu, previously called New Hebrides). Students come from most nations of the South Pacific Islands to study law there. Many of them are born leaders, sons and daughters of chiefs and government leaders.

The very active CF at the School of Law regularly organised outreaches in the town and at the university. About one third of the 120 students in the four year law course attended the weekly CF meeting on Friday nights, and a core group prayed together regularly and organised outreach and evangelism events.

The Lord moved in a surprising way at the CF during 2002. The weekend following Easter, the CF held an outreach meeting on Saturday evening, April 6, on the lawn and steps of the university square. The grassy square faces the main lecture buildings, school administration and library. God moved on them in a strong way that night.

Romulo Nayacalevu, then President of the Christian Fellowship reported:

The speaker was the Upper Room Church pastor, Jotham Napat who is also the director of Meteorology here in Vanuatu. The night was filled with the awesome power of the Lord and we had the back up service of the Upper Room church ministry who provided music with their instruments. With our typical Pacific Island setting of bush and nature all around us, we had dances, drama, and testified in an open environment, letting the wind carry the message of salvation to the bushes and the darkened areas. That worked because most of those that came to the altar call were people hiding or listening in these areas. The Lord was on the road of destiny with many people that night.

Unusual lightning hovered around in the sky, and as soon as the prayer teams had finished praying with those who rushed forward at the altar call, then the tropical rain pelted down on that open field area. God poured out his Spirit on many lives that night, including Jerry Waqainabete and Simon Kofe, both dramatically changed.

Many of these people are now leaders in their various Pacific Islands nations, both in civic and church affairs. Some of them experienced powerful conversions that night. Many were filled with the Spirit and began to experience spiritual gifts in their lives in new ways. Some students who had been heavily involved in drinking and night clubs found new freedom and zeal for God and have become effective evangelists through their changed lives. Many of the law students attended the lively, Spirit-led Upper Room church in Port Vila, where pastors Joseph and Jotham and others encouraged and nurtured them.

Eleven of those students came to Brisbane, led by Romulo their President, and led by the Holy Spirit, far more importantly! They sang and spoke at dozens of meetings in dozens of churches and homes, and prayed for people constantly. They were familiar with pastors laying hands on people and praying for them, but now they were doing that also, and seeing God touch people in many ways.

The law students from the Christian Fellowship (CF) grew strong in faith. Jerry, one of the students from Fiji, returned home after the visit to Australia, and prayed for over 70 sick people in his village, seeing many miraculous healings. His transformed life challenged the village because he had been converted at CF at the law school after a very wild time as a youth in the village. The following year, 2003, Jerry led revival in his village. He prayed early every morning in the Methodist Church. Eventually some children and then some of the youth joined him early each morning. By 2004 he had 50 young people involved, evangelising, praying for the sick, casting out spirits, and encouraging revival.

Simon, returned to his island of Tuvalu, also transformed at university through CF. He witnessed daily to his relatives and friends all through the vacation in December-January, bringing many of them to the Lord. He led a team of youth involved in Youth Alive meetings, and prayed with the leaders each morning from 4am. Simon became President of the Christian Fellowship at the Law School from October 2003 for a year.

### **Pentecost Island**

In May 2003 I took a team from the CF to Pentecost Island in Vanuatu for a weekend of outreach meetings on South Pentecost. The national Vanuatu Churches of Christ Bible College, at Banmatmat, stands near the site of the first Christian martyrdom there.

*Tomas Tumtum had been an indentured worker on cane farms in Queensland, Australia. Converted there, he returned around 1901 to his village on South Pentecost with a new young disciple from a neighbouring island. They arrived when the village was tabu (taboo) because a baby had died a few days earlier, so no one was allowed into the village. Ancient tradition dictated that anyone breaking tabu must be killed, so they were going to kill Tomas, but his friend Lulkon asked Tomas to tell them to kill him instead so that Tomas could evangelize his own people. Just before he was clubbed to death at a sacred mele palm tree, he read John 3:16, then closed his eyes and prayed for them. Tomas became a pioneer of the church in South Pentecost, establishing Churches of Christ there.*

Hosted by Chief Willie Bebe, the CF team of six led meetings in Salap village each night Friday-Sunday and Sunday morning - in Bislama, the local Pidgin and in basic English. It was a kind of miracle. That village church sang revival choruses, but the surrounding villages still used hymns from mission days! The weekend brought new unity among the competing village churches. The Sunday night service went from 6-11 p.m., although we 'closed' it three times after 10 p.m., with a closing prayer, then later on a closing song, and then later on a closing announcement. People just kept singing and coming for prayer.

God opened a wide door on Pentecost Island (1 Cor 16:8-9). Another team of four students from the law school CF returned to South Pentecost in June 2003 for 12 days of meetings in villages. Again, the Spirit of God moved strongly. Leaders repented publicly of divisions and criticisms. Then youth began repenting of backsliding or unbelief. A great-grand-daughter of the pioneer Tomas Tumtum gave her life to God in the village near his grave at the Bible College.

We held rallies in four villages of South Pentecost each evening from 6 pm. for 12 days, with teaching sessions on the Holy Spirit held in the main village church of Salap each morning for a week. The team experienced a strong leading of the Spirit in the worship, drama, action songs with Pacific dance movements, and preaching and praying for people.

Mathias, a young man who repented deeply with over 15 minutes of tearful sobbing, is

now the main worship leader in revival meetings. *When he was leading and speaking at a revival meeting at the national Bible College, a huge supernatural fire blazed in the hills directly opposite the Bible College chapel in 2005, but no bush was burned.*

## **Pentecost Bible College**

By 2004, the Churches of Christ national Bible College at Banmatmat on Pentecost Island increasingly became a centre for revival. Pastor Lewis Wari and his wife Marilyn hosted these gatherings at the Bible College, and later on Lewis spoke at many island churches as the President of the Churches of Christ. Lewis had been a leader in strong revival movements on South Pentecost as a young pastor from 1988.

Our leaders' seminars and youth conventions at the Bible College focused on revival. The college hosted regular courses and seminars on revival for a month at a time, each day beginning with prayer together from 6 a.m., and even earlier from 4.30am in the youth convention in December, 2004, as God's Spirit moved on the youth leaders in that area.

Morning sessions continued from 8am to noon, with teaching and ministry. As the Spirit moved on the group, they continued to repent and seek God for further anointing and impartation of the Spirit in their lives. Afternoon sessions featured sharing and testimonies of what God is doing. Each evening became a revival meeting at the Bible College with worship, sharing, preaching, and powerful times of ministry to everyone seeking prayer.

Teams from the Bible College led revival meetings in village churches each weekend. Many of these went late as the Spirit moved on the people with deep repentance, reconciliation, forgiveness, and prayer for healing and empowering.

A law student team from Port Vila, led by Seini Puamau, Vice President of the CF, had a strong impact at the High School on South Pentecost Island with responses at all meetings. Most of the whole residential school of 300 responded for prayer at the final service on Sunday night 17 October, 2004, after a powerful testimony from Joanna Kenilorea. The High School principal, Silas Buli, has prayed for years from 4am each morning for the school and the nation, alone or with some of his staff.

The church arranged for more revival teaching at their national Bible College for two weeks to over two dozen church leaders. On the weekend in the middle of that course, teams from the college held mission meetings simultaneously in seven different villages. Every village saw strong responses, including a team that held their meeting in the chief's meeting house of their village, and the first to respond was a fellow from the 'custom' traditional heathen village called Bunlap.

Through 2004-2005 we held many revival leadership meetings at the Bible College, usually in my vacations from college in Brisbane. Don and Helen Hill from the Renewal Fellowship in Brisbane joined me there for some visits. They provided needed portable generators and lawn mowers, and Don repaired the electrical wiring and installations at the Bible College. Helen recorded my teaching sessions, now available on DVD. Friends around the world, such as in Kenya, Nepal and the Pacific, have used those DVDs for their leadership training.

Those Bible College sessions seemed like preparation for revival. Every session led into ministry. Repentance went deep. Prayer began early in the mornings, and went late into the nights.

Chief Willie asked for a team to come to pray over his home and tourist bungalows.

Infestation by magic concerned him. So a prophetic and deliverance team of leaders at the Bible College of about six people prayed there. Mathias reported that they located witchcraft items in the ground, removed them and claimed the power of Jesus' blood to cleanse and heal the land.

Many of the older people attending these intensive teaching sessions had been involved in local revivals through many years. They understood the principles involved such as repentance, reconciliation, unity, personal and group prayer that was earnest and full of faith, and using various gifts of the Spirit. They were most familiar with words of wisdom and knowledge, discerning spirits (especially from local witchcraft), revelations, healings and deliverance.

I learned much from them, especially about the spirit world and humbly seeking God for revelation and direction. We westerners tend to jump in and organize things without really waiting patiently on God for his revelation and direction. Many westerners, including missionaries, find waiting frustrating or annoying, but local people find it normal and natural. Wait on God and move when he shows you the way. For example, you can seek the Lord about who will speak, what to say, and how to respond. We westerners often use schedules and programs instead.

Village evangelism teams from South Pentecost continue to witness in the villages, and visit other islands. Six people from these teams came to Brisbane and were then part of 15 from Pentecost Island on mission in the Solomon Islands in 2006.

### **Pentecost on Pentecost**

Grant Shaw joined me on Pentecost Island in Vanuatu in September-October 2006. Grant grew up with missionary parents, saw many persecutions and miracles, and had his dad recounting miraculous answers to prayer as a daily routine. They often needed to pray for miracles, and miracles happened. From 14 years old Grant participated in mission teams travelling internationally in Asia. Then he attended a youth camp at Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship which had revival from 1994. He then worked there as an associate youth pastor for 18 months before studying at Bible College in Brisbane. So he is used to revival - all his life! In Vanuatu he received clear words of knowledge, and saw people healed daily in Port Vila and on Pentecost Island both in meetings and in the villages. That inspired and challenged everyone.

We attended the afternoon service at Upper Room church in Port Vila. That night the senior pastors were in Tanna Island on mission and the remaining leaders were so glad God had sent us to preach that night! Great warning! It was fantastic. Worship was strong.

### **Raised from the dead**

At sharing time in the Upper Room service Leah, a nurse, told how she had been on duty that week when parents brought in their young daughter who had been badly hit in a car accident, and showed no signs of life - the monitor registered zero - no pulse. Leah felt unusual boldness, so commanded the girl to live, and prayed for her for an hour, mostly in tongues. After an hour the monitor started beeping and the girl recovered. What a great testimony!

Grant gave words of knowledge about healings needed and prayed for those people, then told some of his testimony. When he was eight years old he saw Jesus in a vision, so bright



that Grant could not see his face. In the vision Grant saw the glorious gates of heaven, but did not enter, although he wanted to.

We prayed for all the children, many of them ‘resting’ in the Spirit. Then Grant told more of his testimony, about his time in Toronto. The message that night covered Luke 8, 9, 10 - where Jesus, the 12 and the 70 all did the same things, with no money, preached the same message on the Kingdom of God, and had the same ministry of healing. Most people came out for prayer, most of them resting in the Spirit.

On Tuesday, the day we flew to Pentecost Island I woke again at 3 a.m., as often happened in the previous few weeks, but this was different. I had just seen a quick and powerful vision (while asleep). After seeing a ‘wall’ full of accusations ripped apart with a golden tear, I saw a marvellous long cascade waterfall full of bright living colours. The vision then merged into a brilliant hillside scene where Jesus the Good Shepherd, with shawl and staff, gathered his flock to himself. At first I thought they were sheep but the forms became children and people. I didn’t see Jesus’ face but felt his huge love for everyone - wanting them all to come to him and gathering them to himself. I woke up crying with joy. Significant timing as we started on Pentecost Island that night.

Our mission continued on South Pentecost once more. Based in the village of Panlimsi where Mathias was then the young pastor, we slept in a house with bamboo walls and floor and thatch roof, and ate with their team there in the village.

The Spirit moved strongly in all the meetings. Repentance. Reconciliations. Many healings, daily. Confessions. Anointing. Healings included Pastor Rolanson’s young son able to hear clearly after being born partially deaf. Rolanson leads evangelism teams, and helped lead this mission.

South Pentecost attracts tourists with its land diving – men jumping from high towers with vines attached to their ankles. Grant prayed for a jumper who had hurt his neck, and the neck cracked back into place. After prayer, an elderly man no longer needed a walking stick to come up the hill to the meetings. The Lord healed a son of the paramount chief of South Pentecost from Bunlap, a ‘custom’ village, when Grant prayed for him and pain left his sore leg. He invited the team to come to his village to pray for the sick. No white people had ever been invited there to minister previously.

A team of about 20 of us trekked for a week into mountain villages. I literally obeyed Luke 10 – going with no extra shirt, no sandals, and no money. The trek began with a five hour walk across the island to Ranwas on the eastern side. Mathias led worship, with strong moves of the Spirit touching everyone. At one point I spat on the dirt floor, making mud to show what Jesus did once. No one had ever done such a thing there! Marilyn Wari, wife of the President of the Churches of Christ in Vanuatu, then jumped up asking for prayer for her eyes. Later she testified that the Lord told her to do that, and then she found she could read without glasses.

### **Glory in a remote village**

We trekked through Bunlap, the ‘custom’ village where the paramount chief lived, and prayed for more sick people. Some had pain leave immediately, and people there became more open to the gospel. Then the team trekked for seven hours to Ponra, a remote village further north on the east coast. Revival meetings erupted there! The Spirit just took over. Visions. Revelations. Reconciliations. Healings. People drunk in the Spirit. Many resting on the floor

getting blessed in various ways. When they heard about healing through ‘mud on the eye’ at Ranwas some came straight out asking for mud packs also!

One of the girls in the team had a vision of the village children there paddling in a pure sea, crystal clear. They were like that - so pure. Not polluted at all by TV, videos, movies, magazines, worldliness. Their lives were so clean. Just pure love for the Lord, especially among the young.

Angels singing filled the air about 3am. It sounded as though the village church was packed. The harmonies in high descant declared “For You are great and You do wondrous things. You are God alone” and then harmonies, without words until words again for “I will praise You O Lord my God with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name for evermore” with long, long harmonies on “forever more.” Just worship.

The team stayed two extra days there. Everyone received prayer, and many people surrendered to the Lord both morning and night. Everyone was repenting, as the Spirit moved on us all.

Grant’s legs, cut and sore from the long trek, saved the team from the long trek back. The villagers arranged a boat ride back around the island from the east to the west for the team’s return. Revival meetings continued back at the host village, Panlimsi, led mainly in worship by Mathias, with Pastor Rolanson organising things. Also at two other villages the Spirit moved powerfully as the team ministered, with much reconciliation and dancing in worship.

People in the host village heard angels singing there also. At first they too were thinking it was the church full of people, but they realised that the harmonies were more wonderful than we can sing.

Grant and I returned full of joy on the one hour flight to Port Vila after a strong final worship service at the host village on the last Sunday morning, and reported to the Upper Room Church in Port Vila on Sunday evening. Again the Spirit moved so strongly the pastor didn’t need to use his message. More words of knowledge. More healings. More anointing and many resting in the Spirit, soaking in grace.

### ***Vanuatu: Tanna Island***

That church continued to minister in the Spirit and saw powerful moves of God in the islands, especially Tanna Island. They planted churches there in ‘custom’ villages, invited by the chiefs because the chiefs have seen their people healed and transformed.

During their missions there in 2006, many young boys asked to be ‘ordained’ as evangelists in the power of the Spirit. They returned to their villages and many of those young boys established churches in their villages as they spoke, told Bible stories, and sang original songs given to them by the Spirit.

The Lord moved strongly on young people, especially in worship and prayer. Children and youth were anointed to write and sing new songs in the local dialects. Some children asked the pastors to ordain them as missionaries – which was new for everyone. After prayer about it, they did. Those children are strong evangelists already, telling Bible stories in pagan villages. One 9 year old boy did that, and people began giving their lives to God in his pagan village, so he became their ‘pastor’, assisted by older Christians from other villages.

### ***Vanuatu: Pentecost (2010-2018)***

One Sunday there we shared in a combined churches service in the packed village church. Before the service Andrew had words of knowledge about pain in a man’s shoulders and the right side of a woman’s face. Both came for prayer while people were gathering in the

church. We then discovered that the man was the leader of the service and the woman preached that day! Many times, the words of knowledge Andrew received were for pastors and leaders first, and then later we prayed for others. At that Sunday service I was strongly led to call people out for prayer during communion. That was a first for them. It never happened in communion. A large number came for prayer and the healings were fast and strong. One night Andrew felt led to wash everyone's feet. That took the whole service! We put a bucket of water near the door (regularly refilled) and Andrew washed everyone's feet as they arrived while we worshipped, prayed, spoke and called people out for healing and empowering prayer. I was led to wash the leaders feet that night also. ...

People were even more welcoming this time at Bunlap custom village. We prayed for dozens of people, and their pain left. We talked about the kingdom of God and how Jesus saves and heals. Some of the people told us they believed that, and when the chief allowed it they would be part of a church there. The paramount chief once burned a Bible given to him by a revival team from the Christian villages. Now he is willing for a church to be built on the ground where he burned the Bible. Hallelujah – what a testimony to God's grace and glory. For the first time ever that paramount chief asked for prayer. He wanted healing from head pain. Andrew placed his hands on the sides of the chief's head and we prayed for him in Jesus' name. The pain left.

Like Jesus' disciples, we returned to Ranwas village church rejoicing that afflicting spirits were cast out, people were healed in Jesus' name, some believed in Jesus, and they now plan to have a church there. Our Bunlap host chief told Pastor Rolanson he can bring his guitar and have meetings in the chief's house anytime.

Some Christians at Ranwas were amazed to hear the reports. They faced witchcraft and curses from Bunlap for a century, and they saw many local revivals. Again, during communion on Sunday large numbers came for prayer for healing, and healings were fast and strong. They had never done that in communion before. At all the meetings Andrew had specific words of knowledge about healings, and pain left quickly. ... By the end of the mission trip people in the congregation were praying for each other in faith.

I returned with my grandson Dante and others in June-July, 2017. Stan came with his wife Daphne (my sister) and Emily from Riverlife Baptist joined us. The Riverlife church people sent a keyboard, a guitar, and a large box of reading glasses with us. We often take used and discarded spectacles with us on these trips, and also pray for healing!

This time we had meetings at Ranwadi High School again and once again prayed with large numbers there. Then we returned to the villages for more meetings and visitation with Pastor Rolanson. At a Sunday service, Elder Jackson gave his testimony that his blood readings were normal at the clinic following prayer for diabetes.

We continue to encourage Christians to pray for one another in faith and obedience. I also participated when their new MP Silas Bule, formerly principal at Ranwadi High School, distributed Gideon's New Testaments to the local school.

Then in 2018 I had a team of seven of us. We stayed in Rolanson's village near on the coast. Rolanson, pastor and evangelist, has been with me on mission in The Solomon Islands and Ausralia. Again we prayed with large numbers at their village meetings and during the day. Again we prayed for healing and anointing during communion. That was powerful. Pain left immediately with healing prayers, people were filled with the Spirit, using spiritual gifts, and we saw rising faith and obedience among them. They regularly pray for one another.

## Solomon Islands

The Lord poured out his Spirit in fresh and surprising ways in New Georgia in the Western District of the Solomon Islands in 2003, and has touched many churches in the capital Honiara with strong moves of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit moved powerfully especially on youth and children. This included many conversions, many filled with the Spirit, many having visions and revelations.

In spite of, and perhaps because of, the ethnic tension (civil war) for two years with rebels armed with guns causing widespread problems and the economy failing with wages of many police, teachers and administrators unpaid, the Holy Spirit moved strongly in the Solomon Islands.

An anointed pastor from Papua New Guinea spoke at an Easter Camp in 2003 attended by many youth leaders from the Western Solomons. Those leaders returned on fire. The weekend following Easter, from the end of April, youth and children in the huge, scenic Marovo Lagoon area were filled with the Spirit, with many lives transformed. Revival began with the Spirit moving on youth and children in village churches. They had extended worship in revival songs, many visions and revelations and lives being changed with strong love for the Lord. Children and youth began meeting daily from 5pm for hours of praise, worship and testimonies. A police officer observed that the number of reported crimes fell and that former rebels attended daily worship and prayer meetings.

### Western Solomon Islands

A team of students from the University of the South Pacific Law School in Port Vila, Vanuatu, joined me on mission to Honiara, the capital, and the Western Solomon Islands in 2003. Sir Peter Kenilorea, inaugural Prime Minister and then the Speaker in the Parliament, with his wife Lady Margaret, hosted the team in Honiara. Dr Ronald Ziru, then administrator of the United Church Hospital in Munda in the Western District hosted the team there, which included his son Calvin.

Our team first experienced the revival on an island near Munda. We took the outboard motor canoe with Rev Fred Alizeru from Munda. Two weeks previously, early in July, revival started there with the Spirit poured out on children and youth, so they just wanted to worship and pray for hours. They meet daily from around 5.30 p.m., and wanted to go late every night. Then children did not want to go to school the next day! We encouraged the children to see school as a mission field, to pray with their friends there, and learn well so they can serve God better. So they needed to get to bed early enough to do that!

At Seghe and in the Marovo Lagoon the revival had been spreading since Easter. Some adults became involved, also repenting and seeking more of the Holy Spirit. Many outpourings and gifts of the Spirit emerged, including the following:

**Transformed lives** – Young men that the police used to check on because of alcohol and drug abuse became sober and on fire for God attending daily worship and prayer meetings; a man who previously rarely went to church was leading the youth singing group at Seghe; adults publicly reconciled, repenting from ancient quarrels.

**Long worship** - This often included prophetic words or actions and visions. I visited Sunday services in a village of the lagoon. About 200 youth and children led worship at both services with 1,000 attending. They sang revival songs and choruses accompanied by their

youth band. I prayed individually for over 200 people from 9.30 to 11.30pm They just kept coming, mostly adults. On the Monday night at Seghe the congregation worshipped from before 6pm to after 9 p.m. After that I taught, and prayed with each of the family groups there.

**Visions** - Children saw visions of Jesus (smiling at worship, weeping at hard hearts), angels, hell (with relatives sitting close to a lake of fire, so the children warned them); some kids saw Jesus with a foot in heaven and a foot on earth, like Mt 28:18 - "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." One boy preached (prophesied) for 1½ hours, Spirit-led.

**Revelations** - especially words of knowledge about hidden things, including magic artefacts and good luck charms. Jesus wants no rivals! Kids told parents where they hid these things! If other adults did that there would be anger and feuds, but they had to accept it from their children. One boy told police that a man accused of stealing a chain saw (and sacked) was innocent as he claimed, and gave them the name of the culprit, by word of knowledge.

**Spiritual Gifts** – including controversial ones, kept multiplying. Adults asked many questions at teaching sessions. We discussed traditional and revival worship, deliverance, discernment of spirits, gifts of the Spirit, understanding and interpreting visions, tongues, healing, Spirit-led worship and preaching, and revival leadership. Young people in their twenties became revival leaders moving strongly in many spiritual gifts.

These revival effects continued to spread throughout the Solomon Islands.

## **Solomons Mission**

I led a team of 22 in the Solomon Islands for a month, in November-December 2006, 15 of them from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu, on their first international mission. The rest came from Brisbane, an international group of Bible College students (from Holland, England, Korea, and Grant Shaw who grew up in Asia) plus Jesse Padayachee, an Indian healing evangelist originally from South Africa, now in Brisbane, who joined the team for the last week. Jerry Waqainabete and his wife Pam (nee Kenilorea), joined us in Honiara. Rev Gideon Tuke, a United Church minister, organized our visit.

Six of the Vanuatu team travelled via Brisbane experiencing the wonders of electricity, hot and cold tap water, fast travel on good roads in a van, and a huge city. They led worship powerfully at the Kenmore Baptist Church 6am daily prayer group, and spoke at some meetings, as well as visiting Australia Zoo and the coast.

Then in the Solomon Islands the revival team from Vanuatu and Brisbane held meetings in Honiara and visited villages in the Guadalcanal Mountains. They trekked for seven hours, walking up the mountain tracks to where revival was spreading, especially among youth. High School youth have teams going to the villages to sing, testify, and pray for people. Many gifts of the Spirit are new to them. Our team prayed for the sick and for anointing and filling with the Spirit. They prayed both in the meetings and in the villages.

One Sunday night Grant and Mathias (the team worship leader) spoke about how they learned to move in the power of the Spirit, and then they went out from the meeting (as Jesus sent people out in pairs) and prayed for a lady in the village with back and leg pains and she was healed. They returned to the same meeting rejoicing and reporting on this miracle.

Mathias involved the youth in singing groups, with keyboards, guitars, and spontaneous items. Our team of over 20, mostly islanders, prayed for the villagers, with personal prayer and prophecies. We ran out of room for bodies to rest on the floor!

## Choiseul Island

Gideon and Grant joined me that December 2006 at the National Christian Youth Convention (NCYC) in the north-west at Choiseul Island, two hours flight from Honiara. Around 1200 youth gathered from across the nation, many arriving by outboard motor canoes.

A group coming from Simbo Island in two canoes ran into trouble when their outboard motors failed. Two of their young men swam for nine hours from noon in rough seas to get help. By 9pm they staggered onto an island near Gizo, and contacted a RAMSI team (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, an Australian army and police project). A RAMSI patrol boat towed the two stranded canoes back to Gizo. The next day that group from Simbo arrived in one packed canoe, minus their food which they had to throw overboard when stranded in the rough seas.

The Friday night meeting saw a huge response as Grant challenged them to be fully committed to God. Most of the youth came out immediately so there were hundreds to pray for. The anointed worship team led the crowd in 'He touched me' for nearly half an hour as prayer continued for them, including many wanting healing.

Grant described that youth crusade night:

The nation-wide youth convention was held at Choiseul Island. We were there for five days. It was an awesome time and God moved so powerfully. So much happened, so I'll just tell you about one of the nights. It really impacted my life!

We were invited to speak for their huge night rally. Geoff spoke first and as he started to speak God began to move on the young people in a special way. Then he handed it over to me at about half way and I gave some words of knowledge for healing. They came forward and we prayed for them. Most of them fell under the power and all of them testified that the pain had left their body. After that I continued to speak for a bit and then gave an altar call for any youth that wanted to choose to give their lives fully to Jesus, no turning back!

Most of a thousand youth came forward. Some ran to the altar, some crying! There was an amazing outpouring of the Spirit and because there were so many people Geoff and I split up and started laying hands on as many people as we could. People were falling under the power everywhere (some testified later to having visions). There were bodies all over the field (some people landing on top of each other). Then I did a general healing prayer and asked them to put their hand on the place where they had pain. After we prayed people began to come forward sharing testimonies of how the pain had left their bodies and they were completely healed! The meeting stretched on late into the night with more healing and many more people getting deep touches.

It was one of the most amazing nights. I was deeply touched and feel like I have left a part of myself in Choiseul. God did an amazing thing that night with the young people and I really believe that he is raising some of them up to be mighty leaders in Revival.

One young man, healed from pain that night, went back to his nearby village and prayed for his sick mother and brother. Both were healed. He had never done that before. He testified about it at the conference the next morning.

The delegation from Kariki, in the Shortland Islands further west, returned home the following Monday. The next night they led a meeting where the Spirit of God moved in revival. Many were filled with the Spirit, had visions, were healed, and discovered many spiritual gifts including tongues and discerning spirits. That revival moved through their islands.

## **Revival Movements**

Revival movements continue to spread in the Solomon Islands. Visiting teams have participated and encouraged leaders.

**Honiara**, the capital has seen many touches of revival. A week of evening revival meetings in Wesley United Church in the capital Honiara spontaneously erupted in September 2007. That was the first time they held such a week of revival meetings, including joining with youth from other churches. Calvin Ziru, their youth leader had been worship leader in the law student team in Brisbane in 2002. He was then legal advisor to the parliament in the Solomons, ideally placed to lead combined churches youth revival meetings and also the parliamentary Christian fellowship.

**Seghe** lies at the south east point of New Georgia in stunning scenery. I taught at the Theological Seminary at Seghe in the fantastic Marovo Lagoon, 70 kilometres with hundreds of tropical bush laden islands north and west of New Georgia Island. Morning teaching sessions, personal prayers in the afternoons (and some rest) and night revival meetings, with worship led by the student team, filled an eventful week in September 2007. That was the first time they hosted such a week at the seminary. Meetings included two village revival services in the lagoon, including at Patutiva village, where revival started in Easter 2003. That meeting went from 7pm to 1.30am with about 1,000 people! Hundreds received prayer after the meeting 'closed' at 11 pm.

**Simbo**. A tsunami ravaged Gizo and Simbo islands in April 2007. It smashed all the Simbo canoes, except Gideon's and his brother's which were then on the ocean on the two hour trip from Simbo to Gizo. Tapurae village had hosted many revival meetings. It was wiped out by the tsunami, so the villagers relocated to higher ground. Strong moves of the Spirit continue on Simbo. The village that relocated from Tapurae has a revival prayer team of 30, and no one from that village needed medical help from the clinic in three years since they started praying constantly for the sick, laying on hands and casting out spirits.

**Gizo**, the provincial capital of the Western Region is the Solomons Island's second largest town. Its airstrip is an island near the town, with its pressed coral runway covering the whole length of the island. Visitors take a canoe or launch across to town. The central United Church hosted revival meetings in October 2007. The Premier of the region asked penetrating questions and joined those who came out for prayer. He testified that he was immediately healed from stress related head pain and tension.

**Taro**, the regional centre for Choiseul province in the west Solomons hosted an amazing week of unity among all the churches, the United Church, SDAs, Catholics and Anglicans. The meetings included 30 leaders from Karika in the Shortland Islands region, further west. Revival started in Karika the day after leaders returned from the National Christian Youth Convention in Choiseul Island the previous December.

Pastor Mathias from Pentecost Island in Vanuatu participated at Taro. He literally

dropped out of the sky at Gizo on an early flight from Honiara. He boarded the plane with no ticket and no money! Dr Ron Ziru took him to the plane in Honiara, an extra one with spare seats, so he walked on leaving his international ticket at the office till we paid the fare! Gideon and I saw him wondering along the main street as we ate breakfast at the Gizo hotel. So he joined us there, and then we flew to Taro that afternoon. The United Church hosted that full week of meetings and constant prayers for people.

The premier and regional officials attended a meeting at the regional parliament house, which included praying with people afterwards. So did the director for medical services and his staff at a meeting at the hospital. Others gathered at the Catholic Church for a meeting and personal prayer there. Each night combined churches revival meetings were held on the soccer field, with huge responses for prayer nightly.

The Lord opened the way for strong ministry with revival and national leaders in all these places. Revival, reconciliation and transformation increase. God is doing far more than most people are asking or even thinking about in these islands (Eph 3:20-21). In all these places people made strong commitments to the Lord, and healings kept happening.

Both in Vanuatu and in the Solomon Islands the people said that they could all understand my English, even those who did not speak English, so they did not need an interpreter.

The week at **Taro** was the fullest of the whole trip, the most tiring, and also the most powerful so far. Worship was amazing. They brought all the United Church ministers together for the week from all surrounding islands where revival is spreading and was accelerated after the youth convention near here in Choiseul the previous December, where the tsunami hit in April. Many lay people also filled the church each morning - about 200. It's fascinating that we so often see powerful moves of God's Spirit when all the churches and Christians unite together in worship and ministry. God blesses unity of heart and action, especially among God's people. It always involves repentance and reconciliation.

In all these places people made strong commitments to the Lord, and healings were quick and deep. Both in Vanuatu and in the Solomon Islands the people said that they could all understand my English, even those who did not speak English, so they did not need an interpreter. Another miracle.

**Marovo Lagoon: By Don Hill:** This is where the revival started with children of the lagoon at Easter 2003. Geoff had previously visited this church in September 2003. The old church building has been pulled down and the foundations were being pegged out on an open ridge high above the lagoon for the new one, which will probably hold up to 1000 as the revival swells the numbers.

Again students led the worship. Most of the adults were traditional, but there were forty or so in revival ministry teams who pray for the sick, cast out spirits and evangelize. We joined the meeting by 8pm and finished at 1.30am! Worship went for an hour. Geoff then preached for nearly an hour. In his words -

Very lively stuff. Only tiny kids went to sleep - 50 of them on pandanus leaf mats at the front. Then we prayed for people - and prayed, and prayed, and prayed and prayed, on and on and on and on! I involved the ministers (after praying for them and leaders first), and the students - and still people came for prayer - by the hundreds.

We prayed for leaders who wanted prayer first, then for their ministry teams, then for youth leaders and the youth, and then for anyone else who wanted prayer, and at about midnight Mark called all the children for prayer, so the parents woke them up and



carried the babies. I guess I prayed for 30 sleeping kids in mother's arms and for their mothers and fathers as well.

Then after midnight when the meeting "finished" about 200 remained for personal prayer, one by one. So I involved four students with me, and that was great on-the-job training as well as praying. We prayed about everything imaginable, including many barren wives, men whose wives were un-cooperative, women whose husbands weren't interested, and healings galore - certainly many more than 100 healings. In every case, those with whom we prayed said that the pain was totally gone.

I doubt if I've ever seen so many healings, happening so quickly. At 1.30am there were still 30 people waiting for prayer, so I got desperate, and prayed for them all at once. I told them just to put their hands on the parts of their body needing healings, and I prayed for them all at once, while the students and some ministers still there laid hands on them, and I moved quickly around to lay hands on each one. Most of the time we try to be led by the Spirit, but it's easy to slip back into routine patterns.

They were all happy, and again reported healings. I wish I'd thought of that earlier! But at least a few hundred had a chance to talk with us and be specific about their needs. They continue praying for one another for healings and many needs.

## **Fiji**

I enjoyed being part of the combined Kenmore Baptist Church (KBC) and Christian Outreach Centre (COC) teams in Fiji in 2006-7. The teams, led by senior pastor Ric and Anne Benson and pastor Jesse and Cookie Padayachee, worked with the COC churches in Lautoka in the west and Navua on the Coral Coast in the east. We saw many saved and healed in morning visits to villages, as well as at the night meetings.

A 'magic man' in one village came for prayer after seeing healings in his village. Three women and a man who had done fire walking from another village made commitments to Christ, renounced their spirit involvement and were healed from constantly itchy skin irritations on their legs. Jesse prayed for 11 people in the Suva hospital who were then sent home soon afterwards.

I led a group each day as we visited homes, and spoke in many village gatherings, and then prayed for the sick. I was especially touched watching Dr Andrew Cotterill from KBC, a paediatrician, pray for the sick, often with tears. Many reported immediate improvement. Team leader Ric Benson taught pastors and leaders in morning sessions, and I taught about revival now stirring in the South Pacific.

One morning in Navua our group had a meeting in the home of Indo-Fijian pastor Nevian, and his wife Esther. He had just finished Bible College in Suva. Everyone we prayed for there was touched strongly. The first lady prayed for was delivered from some Hindu god spirit. Nevian then became our interpreter as we visited other Hindu homes nearby, and we led one old Hindu man to faith in Jesus. Nevian and his family then attended all the rest of the night meetings, received healings and saw his Hindu sister saved as well.

The team shared together in night crusades in the Garden of Joy COC church. Jesse preached and gave his testimony, and prayed for everyone who came forward, assisted by the team. We prayed first for salvation and repentance, and the team gave follow-up materials to first time believers. Jesse moved strongly in words of knowledge and authority. Many

meetings went late! In both Lautoka and Navua crowds grew as the meetings progressed. Reports of healings and deliverance spread.

One Sunday I spoke at the Assembly of the Lord Jesus Christ church in Suva, an independent Spirit-filled congregation of around 100, half of them youth. Romulo (leader of the 2002 law student team in Brisbane) joined me with Jimmy a medical university student from Vanuatu. The Spirit moved strongly. Romulo called youth out for prayer during the worship, and I involved him in the preaching as well and he called people out again for ministry at the end. That went for some time. After the service we shared food together including a lovo, food cooked in the earth oven.

Then that night I spoke at Sigatoka COC, an hour's drive back from Suva, with 100 attending, sitting on the ground. They had a temporary iron roof cover for instruments and 'platform' area on the ground. We prayed personally for most of them, and saw beautiful healings and some delivered and saved. A couple of young children with hearing problems told their mothers that after the man prayed for them they could hear well. We thanked Jesus together.

### **Lawyer friends**

After the team returned to Australia, I stayed on to visit the young lawyers I had hosted for a month in Brisbane in November 2002 when they were students. In 2002, I drove them around and took them to meetings, and now they drove me around and took me to meetings!

I visited an early morning prayer group of the Graduates Christian Fellowship, another group of young leaders in the nation, and prayed personally for each of the 20 there. That afternoon on Saturday 7-7-07, I shared in the memorial service for the Nigerian founding pastor of the Redeemer Christian Church in Fiji. Jerry (another of the lawyer team) and his wife Pam are now pastors there as well as lawyers, a common arrangement in the Pacific for smaller churches with honorary pastors. Romulo is another leader in that church, and continues to impact many churches and youth groups through his networks of young leaders in Fiji and other nations.

Then on the Sunday Jerry led the service and I preached, and we had two ministry spontaneous times during that service, including a commissioning for Jerry and Pam led by the Nigerian regional co-ordinator for the Redeemer Church, visiting from his church in Melbourne. On my last Sunday in Fiji I preached again at Redeemer Church, supporting Jerry. We had three ministry times, as the Spirit moved in the worship and the message. As that church grows in faith it will certainly be a spark for revival in the nation, and will impact leaders, youth groups, and churches all over Fiji.

On a recent visit to the church I washed the feet of the first prime minister of the Republic of Fiji prayed for him. He graciously washed the feet of the Australians, drying our feet with his rugby jacket.

I spoke at the combined inter-tertiary Christian Fellowships prayer rally weekend in October 2008. The Fiji School of Medicine Christian Fellowship organised and led it. Over 500 tertiary students met for two nights of worship and prayer.

The Fiji School of Medicine Christian Fellowship has about 200 doctors in training with some trainee dentists. They impressed me. Their leaders seek God, and respond strongly to him. Their worship team led the combined campuses rally on the Friday and Saturday nights. Buses brought in groups from the various universities and colleges. Different

Christian Fellowship (CF) groups presented powerful Pacific dances to strong Christian songs. The prayer team prayed personally for over an hour at the end of each meeting for the hundreds of tertiary students who responded, while the School of Medicine CF continued to lead appropriate and anointed worship.

Romulo reported:

Inter-tertiary went very well at Suva Grammar School that was hosted by Fiji School of Medicine CF. It was an awesome two nights of fellowship with God and with one another. The Pacific Students for Christ combined worship was a huge blessings for those that attended the two nights of worship. ... Geoff Waugh spoke on Obedience to the Holy Spirit - this being a spark to revival and power.

Students came in droves for prayers and the worship lit up the Grammar School skies with tears, repentance, anointing and empowerment. The worship by Fiji School of Medicine students brought us closer to intimate worship with the King. It was a Pacific gathering and each and every person there was truly blessed as young people sought a closer intimate relationship with the King. We were blessed beyond words. Thank you all for the prayers, the thoughts and the giving.

Roneil, a Fijian Indian, added, "It was all so amazing, so amazing that words can't describe it. For me, it was obvious that the glory of God just descended upon the people during the Inter-tertiary CF. I've never seen an altar call that lasted for way more than an hour. I myself just couldn't get enough of it. It was and still is so amazing. God's anointing is just so powerful. It was a profound privilege and a great pleasure to be taught by you but more so to see the Spirit of God move in such an amazing away. Hallelujah to Him Who Was, Who Is and Who is to Come."

## **Brazil**

In June 2008, I saw something of God's mighty work in Brazil. George and Lisa Otis and the Sentinel Group hosted a conference in Belo Horizonte and a group of us visited communities that have been transformed in Brazil.

We worshipped on Sunday in the huge Baptist Church of Lagoinha in the city of Belo Horizonte. This church of about 35,000 holds four services every Sunday. The sanctuary is round with two high galleries. Before the worship service began they baptised about a dozen people in the baptistery high above the platform. Their worship leader, Ana Paula Valadao, is well known in Brazil. She led worship at the conference and has led national worship gatherings with over one million attending.

The worship service ended, as always, with an invitation for people to give their lives to God. As people streamed forward, counsellors joined to pray with them. People in the sanctuary let down banners saying, "Welcome to the family of God".

We visited the city of Teresopolis, just north of Rio, where a whole community that once existed on the city's garbage dump, now lives in a beautiful new valley nearby. We met youths from former gangs, now transformed into prayer and evangelism warriors, and we prayed with them on the prayer mountain there.

Then we flew north to see the transformation of Algodao de Jandaira, a rural town which

suffered from 24 years of drought, until God answered prayer. My story draws on information from the Sentinel Group report.

The Valentina Baptist church in Joao Pessoa hosted us. Many of them had cried out for a fresh move of God. A quiet choir member began to have vivid dreams about a town called Algodao de Jandaira. Later they discovered such a place existed in a desert area with no proper roads.

A prayer team drove there, as we did. When the team arrived at the outskirts of the community, they were shocked by the poverty of its 2,200 inhabitants. The community well stayed dry. The team approached one home and discovered it was the only evangelical home in the community!

The church sent a team once a month with needed supplies. These follow-up trips continued through 2003. At the end of each visit, after they had delivered their meager supplies of food, salt and clothing, the team would walk up to a rock outcropping above the village to pray. We prayed there also.

That year the congregation decided to help the people of Algodao de Jandaira at Christmas. They took their supplies and continued to pray earnestly for God to intervene.

On January 24, 2004, the team returned to Algodao de Jandaira. About five miles from the community they approached a riverbed they had crossed dozens of times before. This time raging waters coursed down the channel. Parking their vehicle, the ecstatic believers hoisted supply sacks onto their shoulders and waded across the river.

As they walked the final stretch to town, a spirit of worship overcame them. Reaching the edge of the village, the team stood in astonishment. From the rock outcropping that served as their prayer station, a waterfall was pouring forth life-giving water upon the community below. Children ran in the river, splashing and laughing all around. Men watered their horses, while goats drank their fill.

Shortly after their previous visit the heavens over Algodao de Jandaira had unleashed a deluge. Water exploded out of previously dry wells with such force that huge boulders were tossed into the air like pebbles. After the “Flood of Blessings” – the 24 year old mayor’s term for the recent miracle – they drilled 45 wells to tap what hydrologists now say is a substantial water table under Algodao de Jandaira. We met the young mayor and prayed with him.

The land now produces fava beans, papaya, guava, and other crops. Bees generate high quality honey, goats yield record amounts of milk, and the river is filled with fish and shrimp. For the first time ever they can sell their overflow produce to public schools and outside distributors.

Algodao de Jandaira’s population rose to 3,000. The Valentina congregation has planted a church and social center in the community, and holds joint services there with a local Assembly of God congregation. Today, a substantial majority of Algodao de Jandaira’s citizens follow Christ as their Lord and Savior. When glory is to be given, it is given to God rather than their former patron saint, Padre Cicero.

The mayor’s leadership has landed multiple federal grants worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. Recently, when he presented his case for a further grant, Algodao de Jandaira was the only community in the state of Paraiba to win a grant.

We worshipped in the Valentina Baptist Church, now powerfully Spirit-filled, and also in the Christian pioneers’ home in Algodao de Jandaira, and out on the street in front of that home. That family hosted us. We worshipped and praised God on the rocky outcrop near the town, where their prayer teams had prayed each month. And I swam in the cool fresh water,

now flowing through the low dam beside the town.

God answers prayer! Not always as soon as we want, and not always the way we want, but he does. I left Brazil filled with awe once again. Revival has made Brazil the country with the third largest number of Christians, after America and China.

## Myanmar

In January 2009, I visited Myanmar (Burma) for the first time, also on mission. This time I enjoyed being part of three generations of our family on mission together, with my son Jonathan and my eldest grand-daughter Jemimah, as well as my sister Hazel all involved. Jonathan's friend Andrew Rogers organised team visits there for a few years. Andrew lived with us for a couple of years when he studied at university.

It's tough for Christians in that Buddhist country with a military dictatorship. They are not officially allowed to start churches, but they can run orphanages, so each orphanage becomes a church as well. We worked with leaders in the Apostolic Church there. They have two orphanages in Yangon, a Bible College out in the country, and they brought their pastors together for a conference there with us.

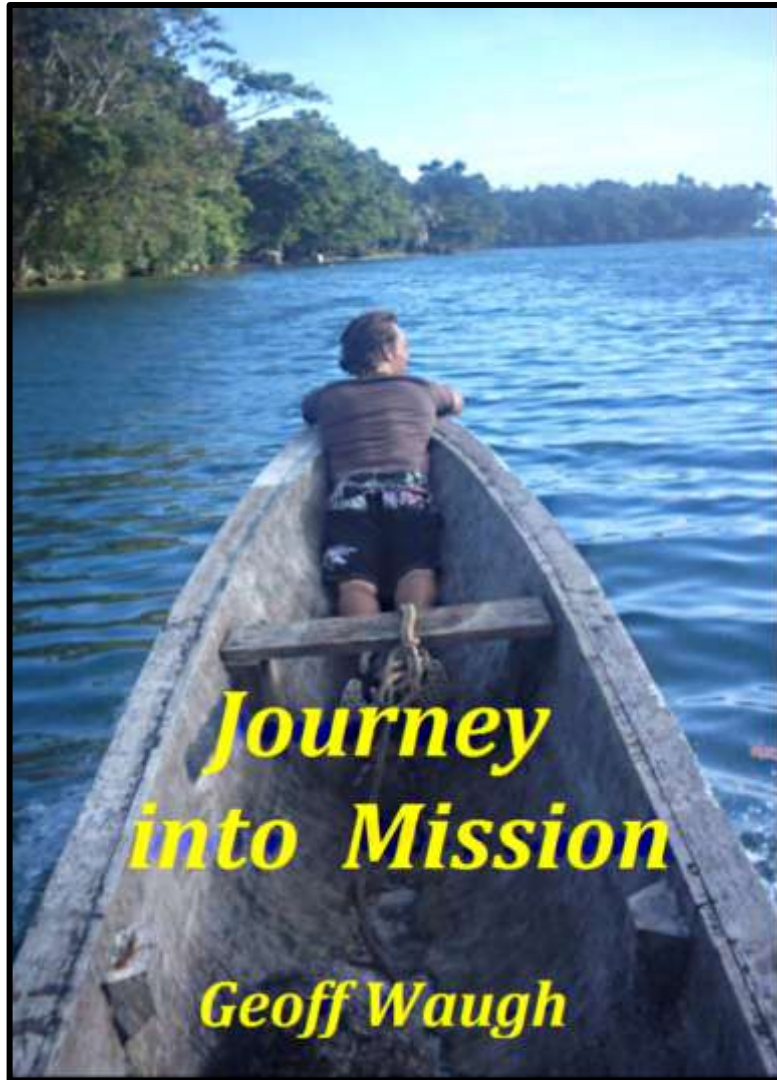
The Bible College is small, but students are very committed and extremely grateful. So were the pastors, some of them coming from very hard, remote areas. They were all so appreciative, and of course want return visits.

Jonathan and Jemi did a lot with the children and youth in the two orphanages, and Jonathan helped with practical work. My sister Hazel visited the orphanages and attended some of the pastors' conference. She provided help for the Bethel Baptists and their orphanage as well. We both spoke at their church, and prayed for people there. She and her husband Kerry have returned there, and people in their home church at Orange support that ministry in prayer and practical ways.

Some of us travelled daily to the Bible College for the conference, 1½ hours away by side-saddle covered truck. Jonathan helped with building their pig sty - so their pigs will be an income producing project. I helped teach the pastors about revival and taught the students at the Bible College. We prayed together in faith for God's mighty purposes in their land.

As in all the countries I have been privileged to visit on mission, not only do we see God blessing the people abundantly, but we too are abundantly blessed.

Jonathan reported, "On our last day a number of local people came to me and expressed their deep gratitude that we came over. There is a level of joy and encouragement that they receive from our simple presence, from white people coming to a tough environment to try and help practically and spiritually. It is so humbling to be told over and over that they are praying for us. May it go back to them a hundred fold."



*Journey into Mission*  
**Expanded from Chapter 8: Revival  
Devotional Books**

**The Christmas Message**

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, in the first of her annual Christmas Speeches (1952), reminded us that 'Peace on earth, Goodwill toward all' is the eternal message of Christmas and the desire of us all. The Queen's Christmas Messages describe the significance of Christmas as well as giving us her compassionate review of the year. This book compiles in one volume her Majesty's reflections on the meaning and significance of Christmas. Excerpts are given from all her annual Christmas Broadcasts.

*About the Author*



The Rev Dr Geoffrey Waugh is the founding editor of the *Renewal Journal* and author of books on ministry and mission. He taught Anglican, Catholic and Uniting Church students in Trinity Theological College and the School of Theology of Griffith University and taught at Christian Heritage College in Brisbane, Australia. He taught in schools and Bible Colleges in Papua New Guinea and in the South Pacific and led short-term missions in Africa, Europe, Asia and in the South Pacific islands.

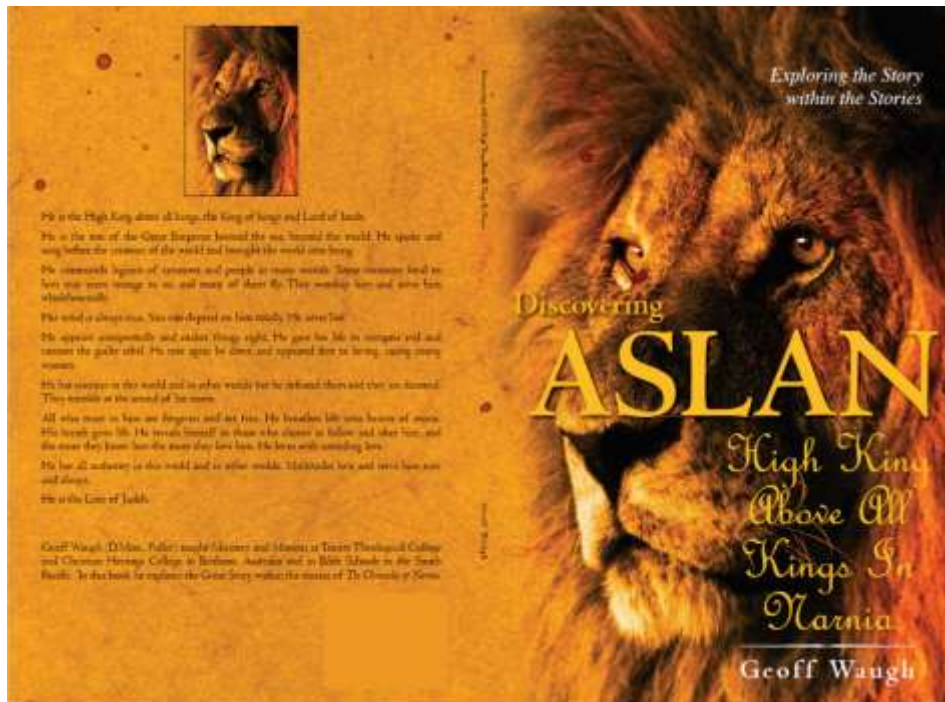


The Christmas Message  
**The Christmas Message**  
 Edited by  
**Geoffrey Waugh**



Queen Elizabeth II describes the Significance of Christmas

**The Christmas Message**



*Exploring the Story within the Stories*

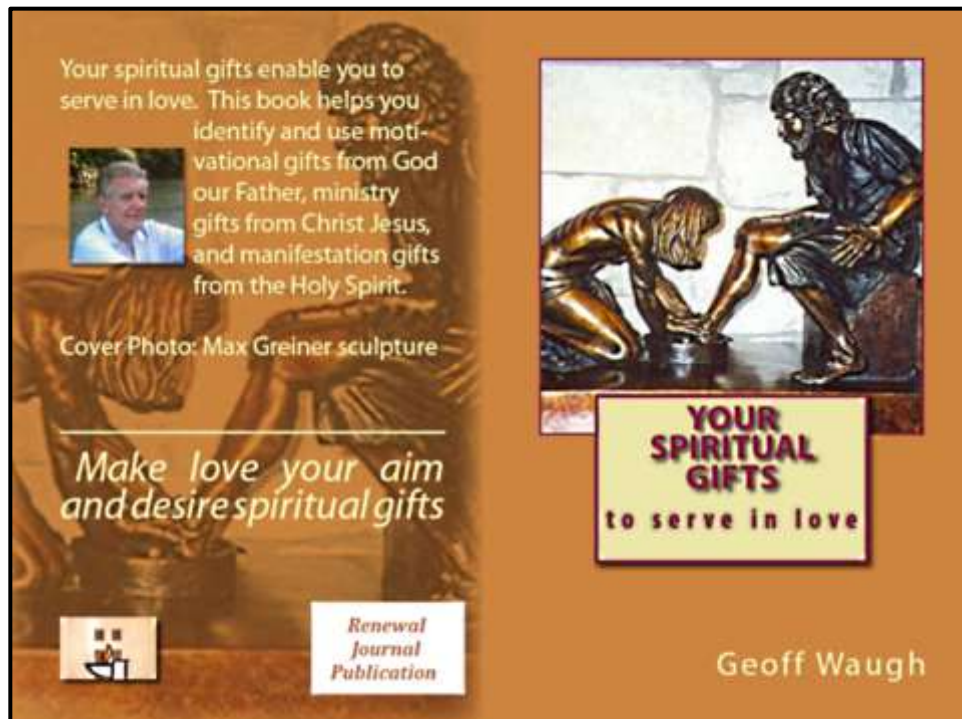
Discovering  
**ASLAN**  
 High King  
 Above All  
 Kings In  
 Narnia  
 Geoff Waugh

He is the High King above all kings, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.  
 He is the son of the Great Emperor beyond the sea, beyond the world. He speaks and says before the creation of the world and brought the world into being.  
 He commands legions of creatures and people in many worlds. Some creatures lead us here and some bring us on, and many of them do. They worship him and give him wholeheartedly.  
 He will do anything. You can depend on him, really. He never fails.  
 He appears unexpectedly and seldom through sight. He goes his life in complete and utter darkness, and cannot be gazed upon. He can appear by dawn and disappear at night, saving many souls.  
 He has courage in this world and in other worlds but he is kind, stern and true, unflinching. This is true in the world of the stars.  
 All other men in him are forgotten and not true. He breaks the lives of those who follow and those who do not, and the more they know him the more they love him. He lives with everything here.  
 He has all authority in this world and in other worlds. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.  
 He is the Lion of Judah.

Geoff Waugh, D.Min., Author, teaches Ministry and Mission at Trinity Theological College and Christian Heritage College in Brisbane, Australia and in Bible Schools in the South Pacific. To check out or explore the Great Story within the stories of The Chronicles of Narnia.

**Discovering Aslan**

## Conclusion: begin with you and me



*Your Spiritual Gifts: to serve in love*



*Great Revival Stories: I will pour out my Spirit*



My journey into renewal and revival is one among millions. All of us can discover more of God's Spirit in our lives.

As we journey through life, our lives touch others and their lives touch us. We usually discover salvation because someone tells us, and we *believe*, by God's grace. We often discover effective ways to serve God because someone shows us, and we *achieve*, by God's grace. We normally discover the empowering of God's Spirit because someone informs us, and we *receive*, by God's grace. So it multiplies, to you and me, and through you and me.

We can all believe in Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, who suffered and died for us. We can all achieve God's purposes, secure in our Father's love and care. We can all receive the Spirit's empowering, as Jesus declared in his final promise on earth (Acts 1:8).

Ultimately it all begins and ends with God. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. We live it out and pass it on as we respond to God. My parents, my teachers, and my peers, passed on to me what they had found, and I thank God for that.

I am grateful for my evangelical heritage in the Baptist tradition, and for my more liberal heritage in the Uniting tradition, and for my more charismatic heritage in the Pentecostal tradition. These flow together for me in rivers of living water. Jesus said that streams of living water would flow from within us. He was describing the Holy Spirit in our lives (John 7:37-39).

"The wind blows where it will," explained Jesus another way. "You hear the sound of it, but you cannot tell where it comes from, or where it is going. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). These powerful currents in the river or in the wind carry us into God's great purposes. The Spirit's streams of living water may flow through all our traditions and can renew and transform them, and renew and transform us also.

I discovered the Holy Spirit's conviction for salvation, sanctification and service in the evangelical tradition. Then I discovered the Spirit of God's compassion for societal transformation in the liberal tradition. And I discovered the gifts of the Spirit's baptism for anointing and empowering in the charismatic tradition. All are vital. Jesus had it all.

My evangelical heritage emphasised the truth of God's Word and the need for a response in faith, trusting in Jesus' death and resurrection for personal salvation. My liberal heritage emphasised the love of God's Grace and the need for a response in compassionate action, trusting in the covenant of Jesus' death and resurrection. My charismatic heritage emphasised the power of God's Spirit and the need for a response in transformed living, trusting in Jesus' death and resurrection for empowered ministry and mission.

All are necessary. Each tradition has strengths and weaknesses, well described by Brian Hathaway in his article "Words, Signs and Deeds" in *Renewal Journal*, No. 4: Signs and Wonders ([www.renewaljournal.com](http://www.renewaljournal.com)). I adapt his comments here.

The Conservative/Evangelical Position: Words announce the truth of God.

The Liberal/Social Justice Position: Deeds express the love of God.

The Pentecostal/Charismatic Position: Signs demonstrate the power of God.

Our response can be in  
Words, living by the truth of God.  
Deeds, living out the love of God.  
Signs, living in the power of God.

Jesus lived in all those dimensions, fully. My journey into renewal and revival plunged me into these currents more fully, and more gratefully. It is all by God's grace. These streams, of course, merge and mingle. They are not separate in God's mighty river, but can

be seen as currents within the river of God's truth, love and power, displaying his righteousness, justice and mercy.

At times God's grace (*charis*) is poured out abundantly, as in renewal and revival. I believe the gifts of his grace (*charismata*) abound now. This has been true in all revivals. Widespread revivals have been called awakenings to these truths and realities.

Revival historian Edwin Orr described the awakenings following the Evangelical Revivals or Great Awakening of 1727-1745 as the Second Awakening of 1792-1810 (*The Eager Feet*, fired with missionary commitment), the Third Awakening of 1858-60 (*The Fervent Prayer*, spread through countless prayer groups) and the Worldwide Awakening from 1900 (*The Flaming Tongue*, spreading the word around the globe).

The twentieth century saw further widespread revivals or awakenings. Following the dark days of two world wars, evangelists and revivalists such as Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Kathryn Kuhlman, T. L. and Daisy Osborn, and others, gained global exposure from 1947-1948. Renewal and revival surged through the seventies with revivals in Canada, the Jesus People movement in America, charismatic renewal in the churches, and evangelism in developing nations with Reinhard Bonnke in Africa, Yonggi Cho in Korea, and many more. The nineties saw renewal and revival accelerate from countries such as Argentina and Brazil and from local communities such as Toronto and Pensacola.

So I want to conclude here as I do in *Flashpoints of Revival*. Accounts such as my journey into renewal and revival raise various questions. What is of God, and what is not?

The answers to such questions can fall into two opposite extremes. On one hand we may think it is all of God alone, when in fact there are always human reactions and even demonic attacks mixed in with powerful revivals. On the other hand we may dismiss it all as emotional hype, psychological reactions or sociological developments, when in fact God has brought people from death to life and from darkness to light in huge numbers, permanently affecting their eternal destiny.

When the religious and political leaders in Jerusalem faced similar dilemmas, especially the boldness of uneducated and ordinary people with a flaming zeal for the Jesus those leaders had killed, they were not happy (Acts 4:13-21). In fact, they wanted to kill those revivalists as they had killed Jesus. However, one of their insightful leaders reminded them that they may end up fighting against God - an unequal match (Acts 5:33-39).

May God grant us the *faith* to believe in our great God who is able and willing to do far more than anything we could ever ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20-21), the *hope* that shines in a dark world where we desperately need God's grace to abound (Romans 5:20-21), and the *love* to serve and bless one another as Jesus demands and demonstrates (John 13:34-35).

Revival ignited the early church and they turned their world upside down (Acts 17:6). Fire fell again and again in revivals, and still does. We need followers of Jesus, full of faith, vision, wisdom, love and the fire of the Holy Spirit as we live for God our Father in our moment in history.

That is my prayer for you, and for my children and my children's children.

# Appendix

## Renewal Journal Publications

### Revival Books

*Flashpoints of Revival*

*Revival Fires*

*South Pacific Revivals*

*Pentecost on Pentecost & in the South Pacific*

*Great Revival Stories*, comprising

*Best Revival Stories* and

*Transforming Revivals*

*Renewal and Revival*, comprising

*Renewal: I make all things new*, and

*Revival: I will pour out my Spirit*

*Anointed for Revival*

*Church on Fire*

## Renewal Books

*Body Ministry*, comprising

*The Body of Christ, Part 1: Body Ministry*, and

*The Body of Christ, Part 2: Ministry Education*

*Learning Together in Ministry*

*Living in the Spirit*

*Your Spiritual Gifts*

*Fruit & Gifts of the Spirit*

*Great Commission Mission*

*Teaching Them to Obey in Love*

*Jesus the Model for Short Term Supernatural Mission*

*Signs and Wonders: Study Guide*

*Keeping Faith Alive Today*

*The Leader's Goldmine*

*Word and Spirit* by Alison Sherrington

## Devotional Books

*Inspiration*

*Jesus on Dying Regrets*

*The Christmas Message - The Queen*

*Holy Week, Christian Passover & Resurrection* comprising:

*Holy Week*, and

*Christian Passover Service*, and

*Risen: 12 Resurrection Appearances*

*Risen: Short Version*

*Risen: Long version & our month in Israel*

*Mysterious Month - expanded version*

Kingdom Life series

*Kingdom Life: The Gospels* - comprising:

*Kingdom Life in Matthew*

*Kingdom Life in Mark*

*Kingdom Life in Luke*

*Kingdom Life in John*

*A Preface to the Acts of the Apostles*

**The Lion of Judah series**

**The Titles of Jesus**

**The Reign of Jesus**

**The Life of Jesus**

**The Death of Jesus**

**The Resurrection of Jesus**

**The Spirit of Jesus**

**The Lion of Judah - all in one volume**

**Discovering Aslan - comprising:**

**Discovering Aslan in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe**

**Discovering Aslan in Prince Caspian**

**Discovering Aslan in the Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'**

**Discovering Aslan in the Silver Chair**

**Discovering Aslan in the Horse and his Boy**

**Discovering Aslan in the Magician's Nephew**

**Discovering Aslan in the Last Battle**

## General Books

[\*You Can Publish for Free\*](#)

[\*An Incredible Journey by Faith\*](#) by Elisha Chowtapalli

### Biographical Books

[\*Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal & Revival\*](#)

[\*Journey into Mission\*](#) – Geoff's mission trips

[\*Journey into Ministry and Mission\*](#) - autobiography

[\*Light on the Mountains\*](#) – Geoff in PNG

[\*Pentecost on Pentecost & in the South Pacific\*](#)

[\*Exploring Israel\*](#) – Geoff's family's trip

[\*King of the Granny Flat\*](#) by Dante Waugh

[\*Travelling with Geoff\*](#) by Don Hill

[\*My First Stories\*](#) by Ethan Waugh

[\*By All Means\*](#) by Elaine Olley

[\*Travelling with Geoff\*](#) by Don Hill

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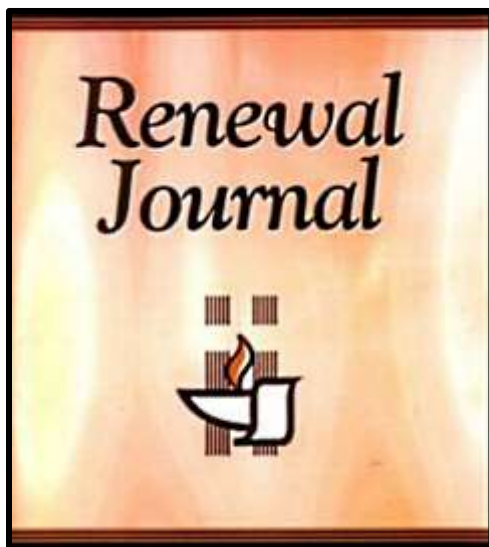
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**Vol. 3 (11-15)** Discipleship, Harvest, Ministry, Anointing, Wineskins

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