

MISSIONARY

# HERALD

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Saying 'yes' to God in Guajara Mirim, Brazil





OCTOBER 1983

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We share in the work of the Church in:

Angola	Nepal
Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
Brazil	Tanzania
India	Trinidad
Jamaica	Zaire

# COMMENT

HOW do you celebrate a birthday when you are nearly two hundred years old? There are real temptations to spend a lot of time in nostalgic reminiscence. Those who glory in their history and traditions, we are told, are those who are failing to discover inspiration and purpose for the present day.

So as the BMS celebrates on 2 October and moves towards its 200th birthday in 1992 we must be on our guard against an obsession with yesterday which blinds us to the vast needs and great opportunities of today. And yet anniversaries, if used properly, can give us pointers to the way ahead. Carey does have something to say to us today!

## The beginnings

Where in fact do we find the beginnings of Baptist missionary involvement in the wider world? Is it in the formation of the BMS in 1792, or must we go further back – to Carey's conversion in 1779 for instance? Perhaps it is to another event we remember this month, Carey's baptism by John Ryland in Northampton on 5 October, 1783? Some would suggest that the significant factor is his reading, that same year, of *Captain Cook's Voyages* when he was not only excited by the adventure of exploration, but also deeply moved by all that was revealed about the sin, the sorrow, the immorality, the cruelty and the misery of unevangelized people.

Andrew Fuller once wrote: 'The origin of this Society will be found in the workings of our Brother Carey's mind.' We might wish to add, 'and in a heart touched by Christ'. Because although we have our convenient dates to mark the beginnings of this and that, in actuality the modern missionary movement had its birth in the workings of the Holy Spirit over a period of time.

## Call to prayer

In Carey we have a life committed in every way to Christ, so much so that when he examines, through Cook's voyages, the wider world he just has to relate his calling in Christ to the vast needs of so many people. But it would be a mistake to see this as a one man venture. In 1784 John Sutcliff called the Northamptonshire Association to prayer. The result was 'concerted prayer for the general revival and spread of religion'. Carey was within this fellowship of churches which was experiencing new life and renewal.

Here then are the elements needed today – lives offered in service to Christ, a realization of worldwide needs, a praying church which understands the part God is calling it to play in telling the Good News in all its wholeness. Churches and individuals today who are alive in Christ, cannot but be fully involved in His loving and caring ministry. This is where missionary involvement always begins.

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# How far are our beliefs and practices influenced by our background? Chris Spencer compares Church life in Zaire with that in Britain.

## This isn't Britain — not even Jerusalem

HOW FAR is our Christian belief and practice influenced by the culture of our home country, or by the traditions of our home church? Coming to work with the church in another country (in my case, Zaire) has caused me to ask that question. Having been brought up in an English Baptist church, there are many things about the church here in Zaire which seem very strange, and often difficult to understand. Sometimes I must seriously ask if something I witness is acceptable in a Christian church. Other things, while different, do not cause such problems, as it is easier to understand why they are different.

There is only one service on a Sunday, but with people coming from a long way away, on foot, it would be unfair to expect them to come to the church twice in one day. What is more, there is no electric light in church, so an evening service would be impossible. Instead, the one service tends to be a lot longer than an English service.

There is no organ or piano. Instead there may be various drums and rattles, which are the normal form of African music. Finding an organist could also prove to be very difficult.

The plate for the offering is not brought round. Instead, everyone goes forward to put their offering in two baskets — one for the women and one for the men.

### Secondary

It would be possible to give many similar examples, but these are not things that particularly matter. They present no challenge to our understanding of our

faith, nor do they make us feel that there is anything wrong about them. We can accept that such things are secondary to our faith, and so it does not worry us that other Christians (even though they are also called Baptists) do things differently.

However, other things that we encounter here can cause much doubt and heart-searching, as we try to reconcile them with our understanding of the Christian faith. There are the times when it becomes important for us to understand how far our beliefs and practices are influenced by our background. I want to consider a couple of examples which will illustrate this sort of problem.

### Hierarchy

In England, Baptists place a lot of importance on the doctrine of the independence of the local church — few

of us would tolerate our own church receiving orders from the Baptist Union. How, then, do we react to a 'Baptist church' with a very centralised system of church government? The church here has an administrative hierarchy, with ultimate authority in the hands of the General Assembly, which makes decisions which are binding throughout the church. There are several things which help us to understand why there is such a system here:

- practically: it is necessary because of the great shortage of trained and experienced church leaders, which greatly limits the capacity of the local churches to make wise decisions.
- culturally: it is suited to the needs of a people who, in most cases, look to their village, or tribal, chief for guidance.
- historically: it recalls the dominant position of an earlier generation of missionaries in the life of the church.



*The women make their offering*



However, to understand why the situation is as it is is not the same as knowing whether it is right or wrong. Our practice in England is based on the belief that the independent local church conforms best to the pattern of church life described in the New Testament. Are we, then, justified in accepting, and working within, a system which appears to be 'unscriptural'?

## Giving

A second example is seen in the policy of the church here about giving for the work of the church. Having been brought up to believe that what a Christian gives is between him and God (with perhaps the tithe as a suggested guide-line), it is a shock to find the church here fixing the amount that each church member must give, and bringing disciplinary action against those who fail to pay up. The amount asked does vary according to the means of each church member, but to exclude someone from the communion, or even from church membership, for not giving enough seems harsh, and perhaps even un-Christian.



*No organ to accompany singing*

# LET THE WHOLE WORLD KNOW

## A UNITED MISSIONARY RALLY

Friday 18 November 7.30 pm  
All Souls  
Langham Place, London W1

### Speaker:

**Dr Helen Roseveare**

### Music:

**London Emmanuel Choir**

*Missionary Exhibition –  
including BMS display –  
5.00 pm – 7.15 pm*

Our understanding of this practice can only come through an understanding of the culture and history of the local people, and of their attitude to money. With a very different concept of stewardship, and very different priorities in the use of money, it has been found necessary to insist very strongly on the importance of giving for the work of God. But how do you show that importance? In this culture, failure to fulfil an important duty inevitably entails some form of punishment.

## Not Britain

It would be possible to raise other, similar issues, but the purpose of this article is not to list things which could be seen as criticisms of the church here. Rather, I am trying to show how it can be difficult for a missionary to fit comfortably into the church with which he should be working. Failure to accept the beliefs and practices of the local church can produce conflict, with the result that our work is of little value. So we try not to judge the church here by our own standards, but by theirs. This is not Britain, and we should not expect a

church in this context to behave, or think, in the same way as a British church.

Nor is this Jerusalem, or Ephesus, or Corinth, or Rome. If the life of the church in England is influenced by its environment, is this not also true of the churches described in the New Testament. Certainly, a detailed study of those churches will show that they differed one from another. We have no right to expect that the church in Africa will be like either the churches of the New Testament, or like the churches in Britain today. Just as the message of the gospel can be proclaimed in all the languages of men; so also the fruit of that message can grow and flourish in all the cultures of mankind.

As we seek to work with the church in this country, helping to bring the message of Christ to this people, we need the wisdom not to be bound by the traditions of our own land. May God grant us a vision of the form that his church should take in this particular environment, and may our own background not blind us to that vision.



# Q's Q's Q's *by Deba*

KEN and Maureen Russell recently returned to Zaire. On the 9 July they wrote:

*'Twenty-four hours is never long enough to do all that must be done, so one is frustrated at the work piling up. Every missionary has to face it.'*

There is perhaps one of the greatest problems our missionaries battle with. How can they stop feeling permanently guilty because of the jobs they have not yet done? A failure to complete some task may well inconvenience someone else who is also under pressure. How can they show God's love to those they are seeking to serve if they never have time to stop and talk to them? How often the warm smile is replaced by a harrassed stare?

Those of us who do have time to talk, let us give thanks for it, and use it.

## Q Q Q Q Q

A few weeks ago, somewhat reluctantly, I spent a whole evening chatting (and laughing) with a fellow Church member who I didn't know very well. I did know, and so did he, that there were many issues on which we held very different views. But that evening we had time to talk. Surprise! Surprise! There were many things we did agree about, and the others . . . we still don't agree, but we understand each other's point of view and have learned from it.

Do we only talk to those whom we naturally come into contact with? Our own age group? Those with the same interests? Those with the same sort of background?

## Q Q Q Q Q

To whom do we go for counsel when problems arise? To someone who will give the sort of advice we wish to hear?

Many of the Zairean Pastors are constantly surrounded by people, but they live lonely lives. Many go to them for advice, their Church and administrative responsibilities are vast, there are many journeys to make, services to lead, problems to solve.

One of them, young, intelligent, and capable, spoke the other day of the help he received from one of the Church overseers, an old man who knows no French or New Testament Greek, who has never travelled far from home: A man who walks with his Lord, and who is there to offer comfort and encouragement (and sometimes rebuke) to the up and coming younger man with the world at his feet. The blessing they receive through each other is a blessing to the whole local Church.

How much we lose when the differing generations in our Churches don't talk to each other!

Do we really not have time? Or do we not think it is important?

## Q Q Q Q Q

Let's get back to the missionary's problem. Lack of time can spoil their Christian witness. It can undermine their physical and spiritual health. It means that essential jobs don't get done. It

means there is no time to talk. It is a genuine problem.

Does no one have the time to go and help? God has given to each one of us a 'life-time'. What are we doing with it? Is it really true to say that no one is indispensable? Surely each one of us *is*?

A much-quoted prayer used by BMS missionaries is the one by Michael Quouist about time:

*There is a big mistake somewhere,  
The hours are too short,  
The days are too short,  
Our lives are too short,*

*You who are beyond time, Lord, you  
smile to see us fighting it.  
And you know what you are doing.  
You make no mistakes in your  
distribution of time to men.  
You give each one time to do what  
you want him to do.*

But somewhere we are going wrong!





# Like a nursery with — — adult classes attached

**Rosalyn  
Williams**

MY FIRST experience of language school began with an odd trip from Yakusu to Kinshasa. The veteran missionary — and a nurse at that! — Sue Evans — began to be ill as soon as the landrover left the protective ruts of the mission road, and she grew progressively worse. At Kisangani Airport, there was a 16 hour wait. She slept on a camp bed behind one of the counters, while Susan Chalmers — another nurse equally worn out — slept on the rollers of the luggage conveyor. I'm new to all this and I'm pretty slow on the uptake, being more of a granny age. The prospect of taking responsibility on the flight for three of us — two semi-conscious and I semi-intelligent — was awe-inspiring, but all went smoothly without my needing to do anything. We finally arrived at 4am on Monday, having begun the journey at 7am on Sunday.

Even at that early hour, people were ready to meet us, and that's something really impressive. You're not left alone when the BMS takes over. Friends had been at Kisangani, *all* that long wait, to see the plane take off, and at Kinshasa, there again Andrew North and three friends of the Susans were waiting. By then the malaria attack had eased off, so it was a good reunion for them.

Language School is rather like a nursery with adult classes attached. Practically everyone seemed to have children under three, and Lingala and Kikongo got mixed up with feeding and nappies. I guess we all went through the usual stages of learning — enthusiasm, despair, determination, doomsday and slow, slow progress.



*'We set out from Yakusu'*

## **The wrong church**

Our first Sunday found me in one of the three teams, leading services in 'local' churches. It was like ploughing across the Sahara to reach our 'friendly fellowship round the corner'. Three hours it took us to locate the place, and that was after being directed all around the area by various folk who 'knew'. One was a deacon — and, yes, he *did* direct us to the church. Unfortunately it was his, and not ours, and while we stood outside, surrounded by hordes of village children, along swept a well-maintained vehicle, which pulled up with a flourish to let out

a team of Americans, who were in the right place.

Time and again we piled out to push the Transit Van out of the sand, wheels spinning, sand flying into our mouths, and *limputas* (African cloth) dropping off. Sheer obstinacy, rather than devotion to duty, kept us struggling, until finally we hit the right road and reached the church, an attractive building, with the roof missing.

From time to time we had to pause for planes to pass. Unfortunately, the

## **'I wondered when I'd find the freedom to share thoughts with others in their own language'**



congregation had been there since 8.30am, so our carefully-planned service was whittled down to half an hour, and the longest part was the hand-shaking afterwards.

There were problems. For instance, some sort of bug visited the Mission, and one by one folk began to drop. Babies and everyone else had sleepless nights. It left us before the course ended, which was a blessing.

### What's Kikongo like?

On the last morning of our three weeks there at Kinshasa, just before the

examination for the more advanced, and the straightforward test for us beginners, Pasteur Baengenga took morning prayers. A colleague from Yakusu, he was at Kinshasa on his way to France, for four years' study. He had been the 'conversation teacher' for the top group. It didn't do much for my confidence when I couldn't even sort out that he had said, 'Luke chapter 14' let alone the verses following. I trailed out to the classroom, wondering just when I'd find the freedom to share thoughts with others, in their own language. And folk say Lingala's easy, so what the Kikongo lot went through, I can't imagine.

And then, in the evening, time to relax, a special last meal, to remember, when fresh meat and vegetables are hard to find, a concert revealing hidden depths and an epilogue from Sue, underlining what we'd all been feeling. She said that the first priority for each of us is not to be a star linguist, nor even a brilliant doctor or an irresistible teacher, but to be faithful to the Lord, to keep close to Him and to guard our times with His word, so that the channels can be kept open for His love to escape into the world.

□

# Only when we are fluent can we reach out to share the Good News

## Sue Evans — teaching the Lingala Language School

I WONDER if the people at home really appreciate what the new missionary goes through trying to learn a new language.

My mother and father visited me in Zaire three years ago and I still remember standing amused, some distance away, listening to my mother speaking, in English, slowly and loudly to a Zairean, convinced that eventually he *would* understand!

The British are perhaps worse than most in learning a language, because English is so widely understood. Some 'plod' through French and German at school but few come away speaking it fluently. The average African speaks four or five languages and it does not in any way seem related to how intelligent he is.

After surviving six to nine months of French in Brussels the new missionary arrives in Kinshasa to find that the official language of Zaire helps little when chatting with village folk. There are over 200 languages in Zaire and many dialects, but where BMS works our missionaries are expected to know Lingala to the North of Kinshasa and Kikongo — to the South.



*'The students were able to visit local churches'*

It has been my privilege for the last two years to teach the Lingala Language School in the capital Kinshasa. This year's language school was held from 18 July to 6 August. A total of 27 missionaries and 10 children arrived from as far as Kisangani in the North and Kimpese in the South to the joint Lingala/Kikongo school at the mission in Kinshasa. It was a time of learning, but also of sharing. Various problems needed to be talked over, since all the missionaries were in their first term of service.

Three weeks of good food, a cooler climate and good fellowship does wonders for language learning — thus some come away having passed their first or second language examination! During this time, the missionaries in various teams are able to visit the local churches, and with trembling knees lead, pray or even preach for the first time in Lingala or Kikongo — quite an experience!

Do pray for missionaries in their first term of service as they face this formidable task of language study. Some find it easier than others, but for most it is hard, frustrating and time-consuming. However it is only when we are fluent in any language that we can reach out to those folk to whom we go to serve and share the good news of Jesus Christ.



# GOD'S 'YES'

**'There is no greater joy than being at the heart of God's will'**

## **John and Maria Dyer**



*John and Maria Dyer*

WE said, 'NO', but GOD said, 'YES'. One of the most important areas of Christian life and witness is that of Guidance. People often say, 'If only God's will were as plain as it is for you.' Even as a missionary you still have to work out God's will in terms of daily service. Your exact place of work and its nature requires the same strenuous prayer as for anyone who feels called to stay at home.

Guajara Mirim may not be familiar to all who read this magazine, but hopefully, it will become increasingly so as time goes by. It is a town about the size of Salisbury, situated in the North-West of Brazil on the border with Bolivia. It lies on the east side of the River Mamore in the Amazon Basin.

We had been asked to consider this town as a possible new location some 12 months before we came home on furlough. Having made a short visit there, we decided to decline the offer. Now one thing we have learned over the years is that the opinions of Christian friends and colleagues are often the means by which God makes plain His purpose for us. Certainly, it is a perilous thing to ignore what others have to say.

### **Others were quite sure**

Having nearly completed a very satisfying first term of service in Vilhena, Rondônia and knowing that our work there had reached the point when a Brazilian could take over, we were aware that a different location was inevitable on our return to Brazil. That much was clear, at least.

However, while we were still unclear as to our exact place of work in the future, other people it seemed, were quite sure where that should be. First, a letter from the Baptist Convention of Rondônia/Acre and then one from the church in Guajara Mirim formally inviting us to work there on our return to Brazil, adding, for good measure, that this they felt was God's will for them and for us.

Now, when we left the church in Vilhena, only three months after it was inaugurated as a church, some people asked if this could be the right thing to do. We responded confidently that if it was right for us (and we felt it was, as furlough was already overdue) then it must be right for the church. So how could we deny the claim of the church in Guajara Mirim and the Baptist Convention of Rondônia/Acre, based as it was on the same principles of guidance as our own.

Our return to Brazil was then delayed due to the arrival of our first child. Perhaps this would cause them to change their minds and seek another pastor to fill the vacancy in Guajara Mirim and at the same time confirm our own misgivings concerning that particular location. No, not even that. Word came back that this was where they wanted us and were prepared to wait until we could come. In fact, arrangements had been made to move our furniture and personal effects to Porto Velho, the capital, as a preliminary to their eventual

removal to Guajara Mirim. One is reminded that in the past there are to be found those of God's servants who have accepted the inevitable only after a show of extreme reluctance.

### **An emphatic 'Yes'!**

God's 'Yes' surely emphatic and left us in no doubt as to the direction in which He was leading us. That in itself gives rise to great excitement as we see His plan unfolding. It also provides a sure basis upon which to build our hopes for the work to which He has called us. God's guidance is always clear when it comes, if only we have eyes to see it and equally important, faith to follow and obey.

Guajara Mirim is an isolated spot on the vast continent of South America and yet, we believe, the stage upon which He will perform signs and wonders in our midst. The challenge is different from that of our previous location in Vilhena. There we were involved in a work of replanting a church in transit as people moved NW in search of a new and better life. The task in Guajara Mirim is to rebuild the spiritual life of a church which has experienced difficulties in the recent past. Our initial reluctance to go there was based on a concern not to become involved in a situation that might bring more heartache than joy. Yet, as we know, there is no greater joy than being at the heart of God's will and purpose for our lives, whatever that might be, wherever it might lead. With that assurance we gladly offer ourselves to this new task in His service.



# I had to learn the hard way that God is not always in agreement with what I want and that at times I must be willing to go His way and not my own — Chris Spencer

IN the summer of 1976 I returned to England after several years as a teacher in the church secondary school at Upoto. I felt that, amongst other things, I had learnt that I had no great love of teaching, and no great love for Africa. I returned home in joyful anticipation of the delights of life in England, and with a firm determination *never* to return to Zaire.

Eighteen months later I was still anticipating a life in England. By then I had started training for the ministry, and was also engaged (to another missionary). As I was on the spot, I was asked if I would help with the local BMS deputation weekend, and a kind soul at BMS headquarters arranged for Christine to be a part of that same deputation. (It

has been suggested that BMS really stands for the Baptist Marriage Society.) We think that that particular weekend should have a place in the record book, as there cannot be many other deputations during which two members of the deputation team were called to the mission field!

What was said to make us decide that we should return to Zaire? Actually, it was a talk about the needs of the church in Trinidad — and I still don't know what that talk had got to do with the way we felt. However, it left us both strongly convinced that we should return to Zaire when I finished my training. I still didn't like the idea of going back, but I felt that I really had no option — my determination not to return didn't seem

strong enough to overcome God's insistence that I should return.

As is often quoted, 'The best laid plans of mice and men go oft astray.' I cannot, of course, speak for the mice, but I have learnt that it is true for men.

I tell this as a rather amusing story, but there is a serious side to it. It is a great temptation for all Christians to make their own plans in the conviction that what they, personally want is also what God wants of them. I had to learn the hard way that God is not always in agreement with what I want, and that at times I must be willing to go His way, and not my own. It can be a hard, and even a painful experience — but with the benefit of hindsight it is possible to see that God's way was, in fact, the right way.

## 'What on earth are you doing?'

by Michael Griffiths

Published by IVP £1.25

THE COVER of this book shows a young man, with eyes shut, fiddling dreamily away against a background of flame.

By contrast the book itself is very practical. In the preface the author writes: 'This is a straightforward book about contemporary missionary work. It is intended to motivate, inform, reassure and challenge Christians. There is a continuing need for substantial numbers of them to have countries where the number of churches and believers is relatively high, to help build new congregations where Christians are few and thinly spread.'

Working with this statement, Michael Griffiths starts with the nature of God, an outgoing God, and some of the questions of today's world about the need for mission ('Are people all right as

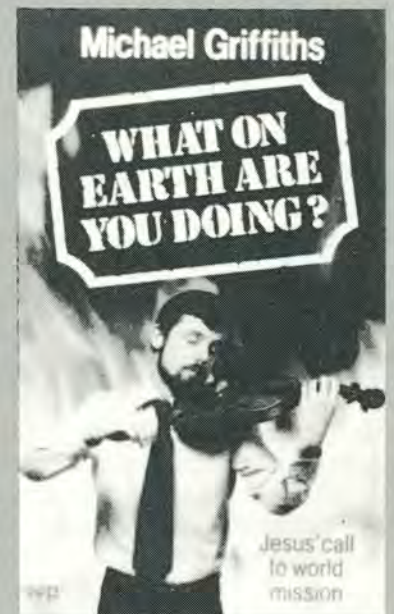
they are?'); the nature of mission ('What do missionaries do?'); the quality of obedience ('What will it cost?'). He explores in realistic terms the nature of sacrifice today, defining it as:

- Loss of cultural privilege and status
- Loss of security and health
- Loss of standard of living
- Loss of family and friends
- Loss of life itself.

In every aspect the author illustrates from the Bible and from his own wide missionary experience, leading the reader at the end to face the question 'Am I called?'

Each chapter commences with an objective; it finishes with a 'check' and an opportunity for thoughtful prayer.

If you wonder whether you are being



called to missionary service, this book could well help you to reach the right conclusion in your own personal circumstances. If you need a new study book for a young people's group for this winter, this practical lively book could give you stimulating working material.

My only real criticism would be that in a day when so many technically skilled people are offering their skills to the Third World, perhaps the total emphasis on church planting might be a little restricted. . . .

A.W.T.



## Rev Neville Cryer, General Director of Bible Society, talks about his visit to Africa

# 'What effect has the Bible had on the life of the church in Zaire?'

That was the question set for me to answer when I visited Zaire at the end of 1982. The Bible Society in England and Wales is one of the 100 Bible Societies worldwide, who together, are trying to meet the worldwide demand for the Scriptures. Zaire, in 1983, will need almost \$900,000 to balance their budget. This is the amount necessary to meet the increasing demand for Scriptures in some of the 350 languages of Zaire.

Come with me to meet some of your fellow Christians in that great country. It's only just over 100 years since Baptist missionaries established the first church at Ngombe Lutete. I was reminded of this short history when I was privileged to meet Tata Wafunzku who, now in his eighties, could remember the very first missionaries. Looking at the graves of these early missionaries, reminded me of the sacrifice which they made to bring the Gospel to Zaire. Many died before they reached the age of 45.

The Church has grown from 35,000 members at the end of 1945, to 350,000 today in just one region around Kinshasa. Congregations have increased because they have taken evangelism seriously. They insist that Church membership should involve not only baptism, but also a commitment to the telling of the gospel to others. Members are expected to own a Bible of their own and to read

it. During a service, which I attended at Itaga church in Kinshasa, I saw that Bibles were much used in worship.

This congregation was delighted to show me their Bibles. But the Bible is also read in the home, where it is studied and used to provide the help which people need in their daily living.

### Empty shelves

Providing these Bibles is a task to which Tata Nlandu, General Secretary of the Bible Society in Zaire, is totally dedicated. He told me, 'The demand for Bibles is such that we often have empty shelves. We have problems because the economic climate is such that it is impossible to get the foreign currency that we need to purchase more Bibles.

Tata Nlandu also has problems in providing the Bibles in the right language. Many older Christians do not want a modern translation in some of the more common languages, yet many of the words in the old translations are no longer used and are therefore not understood by the many people who are joining the Churches. The completion of a new version of the Bible in Lingala, due in 1984, will help, as Lingala is the language of the President and the army, and it is being encouraged as the national language. ▶



*Empty shelves*





*Tata Nlandu, General Secretary, Zaire Bible Society*



*Itaga Church*



*Bible reading at home*





*Mbanza Ngungu Baptist Church*



*Students in Kinshasa for training*



*Lina looking into Bible House Window, Kinshasa*

The dedication of young men and women coming to Kinshasa, to enter college to train made me think. They come from all areas with knowledge only of their own local language or languages. They arrive in Kinshasa and find that they have to learn Lingala in order to shop or travel in the city. At one theological college which I visited some of the text books are in French, but the majority are in English, so they learn these languages. The students are then expected to learn the rudiments of Hebrew and Greek! What a challenge for these young men and women who are so eager to work for the Lord.

### **Where are the Bibles coming from?**

At one Church Lina told me her story. She had been a girl about town and had become very dissatisfied with her life. She had many boyfriends and often went out drinking and dancing. Lina continues, 'One day as I passed Bible House in Kinshasa I noticed some drawings in the window, of Zairians reading the Bible. Underneath one of the pictures I saw a notice asking "Why not read the Bible?" So I went into the shop and talked to the girl behind the counter. "I need help," I said. "I want some purpose to my



*Some love the older versions*



life." The girl asked whether I would like to read one of the Gospels in Lingala. She marked in the gospel some passages that had helped her. I took the book and read it. I returned some two weeks later for another gospel and eventually I bought the whole New Testament in Lingala. I have come to Jesus through the Bible. But where are enough Bibles going to come from for all the other girls like me?'

Bibles are needed in the churches, for evangelism, for the Christians and for those who are searching for a purpose in the country of Zaire today. At one church I saw a collection plate with a Bible given as a part of the offering, given so that one who could not afford, might have. This spoke to me of the love and concern of the Christians in Zaire for their fellow Christians. I left Zaire convinced that all the Bibles which can be supplied will be effectively used.

We in Bible Society hope that through our programme *Africa Bible Challenge*, we shall be able to show Christians in this country, the ways in which they can share their riches with their fellow Christians in Zaire, as well as enabling them to learn more of the exciting story of the growing Church in Africa. □

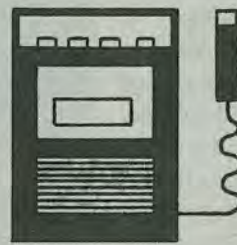


'I have come to Jesus through the Bible'



Bible offering





## Informing or Welcoming?

WHEN WOKINGHAM and District Council of Baptist Churches considered its reply to the General Secretary's request for information on the value of deputation, it conceived a weekend with differences in which the churches and the families within them could participate.

The Missionary Carnival... took off at the end of 1982 and, like topsy, it just grew! Five churches volunteered to adopt certain areas of BMS interest. Camberley's Chinese members explored the new possibilities appearing there. Wokingham took on Zaire, as the families of Dr and Mrs Stagles and Caroline Jenkinson reckoned that they could be informative about the area. Brazil landed at Frimley's feet — they don't yet have a church porch — due to an erroneous comment. Crowthorne decided it needed help in the form of Vera Pike's experience and volunteered India, whilst Easthampstead decided Trinidad needed some long overdue promotion. Each church then spent the months leading up to the event in collecting display items to exhibit and recipes for cooking.

To arrange a family occasion meant children to involve and

occupy. This became a major concern. Colouring in display posters prior to the event gave them awareness, food never fails to interest children and the need to move from stall to stall swapping corners of tickets for interesting items to eat slowed the consumption rate somewhat! One lady commented on how much she enjoyed the food saying that she thought she could live happily on a Brazilian diet — I suspect she didn't get much further than that particular stall!

In fact when a Crowthorne member offered his 'pick-your-own' strawberries at half price for the occasion, wild horses couldn't keep the Easthampstead youngsters from his fields. They also prepared and served over 20 lbs of this thoroughly English dish! But, what of the others — some prepared and wore costumes for which they had done some research and Mrs Gillian Jones, wife of this year's District Chairman devised a questionnaire sheet on both display items and people present.

### Missionaries

This brings us to a question about which you may still be



wondering. Did we have any Missionaries present and was there any relevant opportunity for them? Indeed, yes, on both counts. We had six missionaries and Pastor Bombimbo who was on a short visit to this country. Before you accuse us of greed — we are 12 churches! We are also fortunate in that there is the sort of accommodation which allowed the missionaries to bring their families.

The missionaries who came were: Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins, with their 3 children, Geoffrey and Elsie Grose, with their daughter, and Peter and Margaret Goodall. Pastor Bombimbo was closely followed by Ruth Murley — not to speak — but since her parents 'belong' to Frimley she was pleased to come and translate for him.

The afternoon began at 4.30 pm but was a very interrupted affair! The missionaries although invited to be late chose to come and see. The Post Office almost won by failing to deliver one direction map so the non-recipients had to search us out and then found the car park full!

Our Chairman interviewed the missionaries to prevent ano-

nymity. Frimley managed to supply a professional public address system so they had to be given a hearing! Items were also provided for further entertainment by Camberley, Frimley and Wokingham members whilst Easthampstead invited a genuine West Indian choir from St Margaret's and St George's United Reformed and Moravian Church in Harlesden.

The costumes turned out to be excellent examples of National Costume for which the Missionary Team awarded first prize to Hartley Wintney young People on the grounds of the work they had put in and the accuracy achieved.

### Flaws

There were flaws in the arrangements! One member from Basingstoke — one of our newer churches — complained that there was Society Published material missing! She was right! We had concentrated on the area not the home involvement.

Although one has to admire and congratulate the Missionary Secretaries who stimulated so much involvement in the churches and the House Group Leaders at Easthampstead —



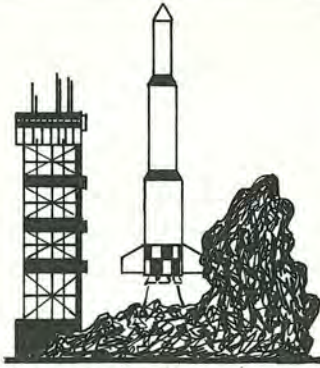


## Lifting Off

How is the project going on your pad? The Sunday School at Ashley, New Milton in Hampshire get involved with the BMS Young People's project each year. This time they aimed to raise £100 over an eight week period for 'Launch Pad'.

Each young person was provided with a 'Smartie' tube together with a letter of explanation to the parents. They were asked to give some of their pocket money and parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles were asked to encourage the children.

The aim was for them to fill at least one tube with pennies. Some were more venturesome — grandparents provided an empty Steradent tube (is there a subtle link here between Smarties and false teeth?). Each class made a rocket, out of washing-up liquid containers, and filled it with the pennies (rocket fuel) and other coins of the realm.



There was also a large rocket on a launch-pad with a gantry — the height represented £100. Each week the rocket was moved upwards and eight weeks later it cleared the gantry and they were all able to shout 'We have lift-off.'

'Some projects,' writes Beris Head from New Milton 'have captured the imagination more than others. We at Ashley are thankful to those who give us the ideas. A little effort on our part and the £18,000 for the YP project should be reached in no time at all. Incidentally we find that many not so young are young at heart and we are grateful for their encouragement and support.'

## Stamps for Sale

The BMS Stamp Bureau has a number of Commonwealth and foreign stamp collections for sale. Any interested collector, who would also welcome the opportunity to support BMS funds, is invited to write to Mr David Hammond, 19 Hampton Hill, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 2EP, who will give details of the collections available and their price.

The Bureau is also willing to accept donations of stamps — accumulations, lots, entire collections and so on. The proceeds from the sale of the stamps goes to benefit the work of the BMS overseas.

## Sympathy

THE SOCIETY was sad to hear of the death of the Rev Ray Schaefer the Overseas Secretary of the Australian Baptist Missionary Society. He and his wife June were killed when the MAF plane in which they were flying crashed in Irian Jaya on 11 July. They had been married for two years. The American MAF pilot Mr Arland Klinberg was also killed in the accident.

Ray Schaefer served in Bangladesh for 23 years and was well known to his BMS colleagues there. He returned home to Australia about four years ago because of his first wife's illness, and was appointed acting Overseas Secretary for the ABMS in August last year.

The BMS has written to its Australian sister society expressing sympathy.

## Gandhi

Bishop Maqbul of the Delhi Diocese of the Church of North India has recently written in his *News Letter* about the film *Gandhi*.

'I have recently been tremendously impressed by the film *Gandhi* and I urge Pastorates to make up groups to go and see it and then discuss it together. Gandhiji really showed what it was like to live out the Christian life in the 20th century. I was deeply disturbed by the film, as it is not only about what Gandhiji did, but also a film about what we have NOT done.

We seem to have missed the way somehow.

'Gandhiji's insistence that there should be no compromise with evil even in a good cause, and his vision that moral right must triumph, was not just an ideal in the mind, but something that he lived out in the real World of bureaucracy, strikes, politics and law-courts . . . a good occasion for us to consider our own life-style, and see how we can live lives that are recognisably Christian in the India of today. May God bless you and give us the strength to live more nearly as we pray.'



who as host church discovered they were involved in much preliminary preparation of grounds and building.

If the missionaries felt, and I have no evidence that they did, entertained on the Saturday; they certainly did the work on the Sunday. This was a much more traditional arrangement

but with a district covering more than 400 square miles and strange service times, many of the speakers were able to contribute to three services and five of the seven contributed to a Young People's get together. We were indeed blessed by the contribution they were able to make.

Madeline Diver

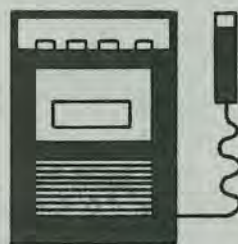
## Loving Care

ONE DAY last October a little baby, Senowra, was brought to Kodamthali Clinic in Bangladesh. She was just a few months old when her mother died, and had been looked after by her eight year old sister. Since then the sister has regularly brought her to the clinic each week.

Sue Headlam writes: 'The happy news is that she is now 14 months old and quite chubby. Her older sister doesn't seem to grow at all, but brings her to the clinic each week and lovingly cares for her day and night at home.'







## A sad reflection on our times

*From Joyce Rigden-Green*

I DEEPLY regret that Mr and Mrs Clements-Jewery were distressed by my article in the July *Missionary Herald*. I confess to some surprise that anything so pleasant and so universally liked as chocolate should be considered offensive, especially as Zairians themselves often use *petit chocolat* as an endearment. If it was the indication of colour which caused offence, then Mr Clements-Jewery would have done better to describe the children as 'African' rather than 'black'. It so happens that 'chocolate' was a more accurate indication of colour and the best way to bring out the difference between a healthy African child and one suffering from anaemia. It also seemed the most telling way to make the point that we have to 'love and let go'. When we cling to something so often it is destroyed or at the least diverted from its proper destiny. It is a sad reflection on our times that many things which are said and done in all innocence are deemed by some to have undertones of racism or discrimination; and this we must all regret.

Concerning the final criticism that the article 'will do the reputation of the BMS no good at home or overseas'; it is rare indeed that anything written offends no-one at all, and I would feel that the reputation of a Society which has so many years of sacrificial service behind it would hardly rest on one article but rather on the continual compassionate reporting of facts and needs and the way in which these are met.

I would like to go on to make three points which I see as relevant to the situation today.

*As Christians* we should be positive and constructive in the face of insult or injustice, instead of negative and deploring, seeking always to be catalysts for reconciliation where friction or divisions exist. Sometimes we make trouble by rushing to the defence of someone we feel is being slighted instead of letting the person express his own feelings which may not even have been ruffled.

*As parents* we should realize that young children are rarely aware of differences in colour or condition in themselves or others, and remember that they quickly and unconsciously pick up attitudes and anxieties sensed in us. Sadly, so often the very things we wish to guard them from become perpetuated in them. If parents are embarrassed by and try to hide from their child any difference of handicap or colour, the child will feel his *otherness* and become self-conscious, sometimes even feeling guilty, and not knowing self-respect; if, however differences are acknowledged the child accepts his *individuality* and gains self-respect.

*As Christian parents* we need to open our children's eyes to the richness of their inheritance in Christ; we need to teach them that life brings much that is hard to face and we need to train them to 'put on the whole armour of God'. With such preparation they will be able to meet anything that life brings whether it be sickness, disappointment or discrimination of any sort, and be 'more than conquerors'.

We very rightly try to protect our children, but such protection lasts only as long as

we live. We give them a priceless treasure if we teach them to rely on God. His protection lasts as long as they live.

I commend the following prayer which, learnt as a young girl, has been a great help to me through the years.

*Grant unto us, O Lord the royalty of inward happiness and the serenity which comes from living close to Thee. Daily renew*

*in us the sense of joy, and let Thy eternal spirit dwell in our souls and bodies, filling every corner of our hearts with light and gladness: so that, bearing about with us the infection of a good courage, we may be diffusers of life, and meet all that comes, of good or ill, even death itself, with gallant and high-hearted happiness; giving Thee thanks always for all things.*

JOYCE RIGDEN-GREEN,  
Leeds.



## An Exaggerated Interpretation

*From Miss Evelyn G Darker*

REGARDING the letter 'Unfortunate', ('Talkback', September *Herald*) I cannot for the life of me understand what the Rev Philip Clements-Jewery finds so offensive in describing two Zairian infants as 'Chocolate Babies'. Would it have helped if they had been described as 'Chocolate-coloured Babies'?

When I was young a certain shade used in dress materials was called 'Nigger-brown', and no-one thought anything wrong with that description. That would now-a-days, and rightly, be regarded as offensive and is never used, but what is

wrong with the word 'chocolate'? It is the name of a nutritious and palatable food, not something obnoxious or poisonous. I myself thought the article quite charming and moving, and can only conclude that the Rev Clements-Jewery, as the parent of an adopted mixed-race child, has some very special reason for placing, what seemed, an exaggerated interpretation of two ordinary words into the prominence of *The Missionary Herald*.

Yours in defence of Joyce Rigden-Green,

EVELYN G DARKER,  
London W4



# Norman Ellis rounds off the recent discussion on the value of short visits to India

*Norman Ellis at his desk in the old Baptist Mission Press*

THE DISCUSSIONS in the *Herald* on visiting Christian work overseas has led to differing opinions about the value of the impressions received.

Possibly my own experiences are relevant, as a visitor and a 'host'. My service in the BMS was from 1931 to 1962, apart from six years in the Indian Army during the Second World War. Most of the time was spent at the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, with service in Orissa and what is now Bangladesh.

I took every opportunity to see village and town work on the spot, often joining in (but not in hospitals!).

As an international airport and then Mission centre, Calcutta was a natural calling point for visitors, especially after the development of air travel. Earlier, visitors by sea were more rare.

## Speedy travel

The advantage of air travel is speed, but the gradual change from West to East by sea was a big advantage. No jet lag and stepping out into the hot air of a very different environment, but an introduction, which began at Port Said, through the Suez Canal, Red Sea, Aden, Indian Ocean and a 40-hour rail journey from Bombay to Calcutta.

Nearly all Calcutta's Europeans went to see the first air mail from England and, eventually, regularly at 3 o'clock on Friday afternoons, a sea plane flew over Calcutta to Singapore, after its overnight stay in the shadow of Bally bridge, eight miles up-river on the Hooghly, a branch of the Ganges.

After the War, the visitors changed from mostly Mission friends in Calcutta either *en route* to hill holidays or to attend conferences, to a much more international range.



## A Little Knowledge

The Press was a 'service' agency for the National Christian Council Literature Board, advising on problems in aspects of writing, printing and publishing, and, in that context produced a quarterly journal, *The Service Forum of Christian Literature*, which went to 80 countries. We also surveyed and advised on working methods on the spot at Mission stations as wide apart as Bangalore and Mangalore in the south to Surat (in the Gujerat cotton area north of Bombay) to Mhow and Allahabad in the north and Dhaka (now Bangladesh) in the east.

This again enabled me to see Mission work in very different contexts, far away from an office desk in Calcutta.

## The new visitors

The 'new' visitors included lay men and women and clergymen from many denominations and Christian societies,

and others on private tours. One of several bishops is still a regular writer in the leader columns of the *Saturday Daily Telegraph*.

The times they were with us varied from the hour it took to see round the Press to several days as guests. Others stayed overnight (we had to be up very early to give them breakfast and to see they caught the first flights from Dum Dum Airport leaving around 7 a.m.).

One lady who stayed one hour saw nothing of the Press. She seated herself solidly at the other side of the desk and fired off her questions. I soon found that all she wanted was confirmation of her strongly held opinions. Alas, these were badly wrong and no number of facts would persuade her otherwise. She left in the same temper as she arrived. She wanted confirmation, not information. ▷



Inevitably, many stories of visitors circulated among missionaries. There was the very well known evangelist who complained because he had to pour the bath water over himself with a dipper from a bucket when out 'in the blue'. He left for the hill resort, where he was to speak at a convention, in an old Dakota aircraft, which leaked in a rainstorm. I've never heard of anyone else sitting in an aircraft with his umbrella up. . . .

### How to form wrong judgments

Most visitors, unless on business, came in the very pleasant cold weather. And this was one way to form some wrong judgments, like the eminent visitor to an Orissa station who said how fortunate missionaries were to live in such a lovely climate. Then there was the Antipodean visitor who reported officially to his Society on the same lines, so possible improvements to Mission property were not undertaken.

On the other hand, there was the eminent New Zealander, who informed us that he was visiting his Society's stations (the Press acted as treasurer to the Society). We suggested strongly that he came during the monsoon instead of the usual cold weather. He did, and after his tour, said, 'I've never seen so much mud in all my life. I'm glad I came now.'

A prominent visitor came to stay with a relative in the field and, after her arrival back in Calcutta, spent the whole of one morning discussing missionaries' living conditions. She returned to England determined to put the matter before her Society's General Committee. Sadly, but predictably in this instance, nothing was done.

Undoubtedly, the most striking visitor to our flat was the great literacy worker and missionary, Dr. Frank Laubach, who strode through the compound gate wearing a huge Stetson and carrying a large rolled chart under one arm, a typewriter in one hand and a small suitcase, with all his travel gear, in the other hand (he used two drip-dry shirts, one on and the other washed ready).

### A humble man

We heard the sound of his typewriter at 7 a.m. and he worked through the day.

At 10 p.m. he joined my wife and me and in 20 minutes went through his day's work and asked for our comments. He visited us three times and was an inspiration — a humble, deeply spiritual man, who had written a fine book on prayer.

Like the Thames Valley minister who challenged a lady missionary, of 35 years' experience in North India, at a missionary rally and who refused to accept her statements. This is one way it is dangerous.

Of all the visits, one from two Indian gentlemen when I was working in Cuttack, 250 miles south of Calcutta, was the most unusual. They asked me if I played cricket. I said I did. 'Ah then, will you please coach the Town Club?' After thinking a bit, I said I would — such is the confidence of one's early twenties. The next question almost stunned me. After thanking me, they asked, 'Which county did you play for in England, please?'

I leave you to find an answer to that one! □

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# NOTES FOR YOUR PRAYER GUIDE

**John and Maria Dyer** (13 Oct), who are on furlough at the moment, will be serving at Guajara Mirim, Rondônia, on their return to Brazil in January.

**Joyce Brown** (17 Oct) has now left the service of the Society.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously. (4 August-1 September 1983)

### Legacies:

	£	p
Mr S B Bowskill	500.00	
Mr A G Clement	250.00	
Mrs H C M Hamlin	5,000.00	
Miss M E Higgs	2,000.00	
Miss E E Kelsall	10,000.00	
Rev B J Keogh	379.07	
Mr H B May	193.42	
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Miss G J Path	346.75	
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Miss A M Rose	200.00	
Mr J I Thomas	300.00	

### General Work:

Anon: £5.00; Anon (Cymro): £49.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon (New Venture): £50.00; Anon: £30.00; Anon (FAE-Aberdeen): £10.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon (RWEL): £10.00; Anon: £5.00; Anon (WEW): £525.00; Anon (EE): £1,000.00.

## MISSIONARY MOVEMENTS

### Arrivals

**Mr S Houghton** on 9 August from Bolobo, Zaire  
**Miss S Evans** on 9 August from Yakusu, Zaire  
**Miss V Green** on 9 August from Ngombe Lutete, Zaire  
**Dr S Roberts** on 10 August from Ruhea, Bangladesh

### Departures

**Miss C Cox** on 3 August to Kinshasa, Zaire  
**Mr and Mrs F Gouthwaite and family** on 12 August to Potinga, Brazil  
**Rev G & Mrs Grose** on 15 August to Delhi, India  
**Mr and Mrs M Abbott and family** on 21 August to IME, Kimpese, Zaire  
**Miss R Montacute** on 21 August to Kinshasa, Zaire  
**Miss C Trundle** on 21 August to Pimu, Zaire  
**Miss N Beale** on 21 August to Upoto, Zaire  
**Miss J Sargent** on 22 August to Udayagiri, India

### Births

On 12 August at Stockton-on-Tees, to **Mr and Mrs C Laver**, a son, **Philip Benjamin**  
 On 16 August in Zaire, to **Mr and Mrs L Alexander**, a son, **David James**

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Our 1984 Brochure will be available after mid-October.

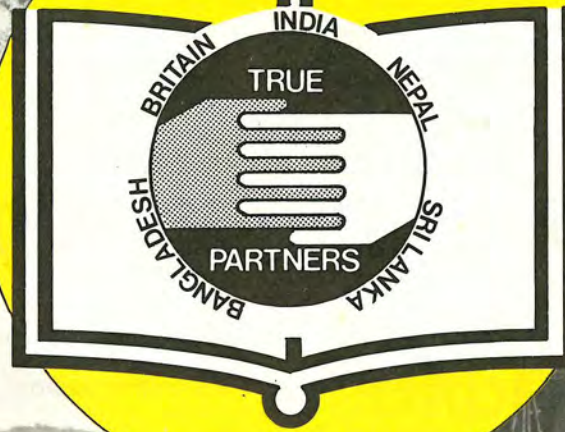
For your copy, or for an Autumn break this year, please write or telephone to:

Baptist Holiday Fellowship (MH)  
 1 The Esplanade, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5BE  
 Telephone (0643) 3473



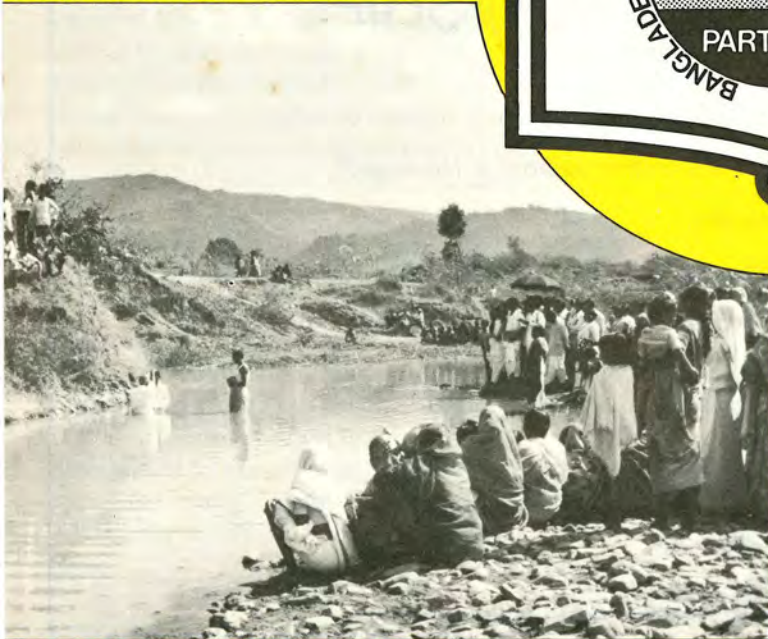
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*Missionaries from different societies at worship, Tansen, Nepal*

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