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MISSIONARY

HERALD

Annual
Report
Edition
May 1988

Editorial Comment

Worth sharing

'WHATEVER'S happened to the Annual Report?' This different presentation of the Society's Annual Report, with the *Herald*, is a deliberate change and, we trust, a positive step forward.

The BMS is *obliged* to produce an Annual Report. The purpose is to present, in an understandable way, information about what is happening. It is also to give an account of the Society's stewardship of those resources made available by the churches and individuals and to encourage a continuing involvement.

The Report has to be presented to the Annual Member's meeting held within the Baptist Assembly. Previously, each person present has been given a copy and then further copies have been made available to anyone interested. Nevertheless, thousands of the Society's supporters have not actually seen a copy.

Yet the story of God's continuing activity through the BMS is worth sharing. Publishing the report in the *Herald* enables many more to see for themselves the variety and importance of the Society's work. May your reading of it stimulate your interest, prayers and support.

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We share in the work of the Church in:

Angola	France	Sri Lanka
Bangladesh	India	Thailand
Brazil	Jamaica	Trinidad
El Salvador	Nepal	Zaire

UNSEEN FOOTPRINTS

IS GOD continuing to work in His created world? Sometimes, as we look around us, we may have cause to doubt. People suffering because of the variety of calamitous events in many parts of the world raises the question poignantly.

Within the BMS partner countries we have witnessed the disasters of floods in Bangladesh, drought in India, and mud slides in Brazil, bringing grief and hardship to many. Internal strife and ongoing enmity have caused death and chaos in such countries as Angola and Sri Lanka and have caused innocents to flee as refugees from their homes. Add to this the economic downward spiral in Brazil and the appalling poverty in many of the places with which we are linked and we are reminded again of just how many persons in this world suffer.

True, much of this suffering could be alleviated by the action of men and women. But pride, selfishness, the commitment to an amassing of personal wealth, the narrowing of views to see development only in material terms, all perpetuate injustice and inhumanity. The needs of millions lie neglected, while millions of others gorge their appetites and starve their spirit.

Where is God in all this? Is there a God whose nature is love and is He at the heart of all creation and all mankind? Are His purposes of love actually being furthered? Is the world stumbling from bad to worse?

Those who shared in the tasks of the BMS this last year have to affirm, 'He lives, He does love and He is working.' Part of the problem is that the fogs and mists of folly and sin cloud our view of God and of His gracious acts. The Psalmist tells of the active presence of God within this world, *Though your footprints were not seen* (Psalm 77:19).

May this presentation of the Society's report disperse some of the clouds and reveal the 'unseen footprints', those marks of God walking with us, going ahead of us, leading us on in the cause of the Kingdom.

Reg Harvey

ZAIRE

FACING THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY

◆ *The Church*

WHAT a mixture of emotions this evokes! Evident life in the parishes of Tshopo and Lubungu in Kisangani; weeks of evangelism in the Lingungu District; songs, humour and drama by the young people's choir at Yangambi; disappointments at Binga; zeal at Yakombo Koi. There is the struggle between old and new at Upoto, Bolobo and CECO-Kimpese with the need to discern between good and evil spiritual powers. There are the difficulties and problems facing those in positions of leadership, and the dilemmas which all Christians face of when to speak and when to remain silent in face of the dishonesty and corruption which is so much a part of the national scene.

The population of Kinshasa, now around four million, is growing. The religious scene is in ferment. Sects are mushrooming and even in the mainstream churches strange new ideas are creeping in.

Faced with way-out beliefs and practices, does the Church retreat to securely held positions and risk not hearing the voice of the Spirit? In Kinshasa, where the CBFZ parishes are facing the challenge of the city's change and growth, there is an urgent need for positive, constructive Biblical teaching and for an openness to what God wants to do through His Church today.

How can the BMS help this Church in true partnership? In what ways can that Church help us? That is going to be the subject of a consultation between BMS and CBFZ in 1989.

◆ *CBFZ Secretariat*

There was concern over what would happen when five long-standing BMS members of the Secretariat staff left. However, Gordon and Ann McBain have



New church in Kinshasa

settled in well in the Department of Missionary Affairs and Zairian colleagues have adjusted to the often heavy work-loads in the Finance, Medical and Christian Education Departments. The newly appointed community evangelist, Cit. Mude, is visiting the Kinshasa districts and will be visiting the other Regions during 1988.

Bolobo



◆ *Theological Education*

In spite of many difficulties and frustrations, men and women are being trained for the Lord's service at Yakusu, Bolobo, and the Higher Institute of Theology and the Protestant Theological Faculty in Kinshasa.

◆ Community Development

The cost of living in Zaire is increasing in the same proportion as the rate of exchange. In October 1986 £1.00 was worth 90 zaires. In May 1987 it was worth 188 zaires. Prices doubled in six months, whereas wages and salaries only increased by 40-50 per cent.

Physically and materially, life is very hard, especially for the young who suffer many diseases related to inadequate diet and polluted water.

The CBFZ has several projects aimed at improving the quality of life and health of the people. The value of this work is illustrated by Wilma Aitchison at Ntongo. She says that the general health of adults is improving as a direct result of the success of the clean water project and the use of improved, insect-free toilets. Another nurse at Yakusu says that the Water Project would prove, in the long-term, to be more beneficial to the health of the region than anything else being done in the rural health programme.

Agriculturalists, Steve and Pam Seymour, are working with Tata Loleka on the Ntongo agricultural project. They recognise that any real advance will depend on the improvement of the spiritual health of the Church.

Refugees from the civil war in Angola continue to arrive in the Lower River and Kinshasa areas (see April Herald). The BMS has sent aid from the relief fund to provide clothing, food, medical care and basic tools.

◆ Education

There has been a sharp decline in educational standards and in the resources provided for education. The Government pays teachers' salaries, but gives no help for buildings, equipment or books. The Institut Lisanga at Kisangani and the Institut Koli at Upoto, however, stand out for their excellence. By Zairian standards they are well-equipped. These two schools have benefited from the presence of missionary personnel.



Enguta and Angolan refugees, Angola

The effect of the decline in educational standards is seen in the level of students applying to nursing schools. On the brighter side, former CBFZ students, now working in towns and cities, do maintain higher and more honest standards.

◆ Medical Work

More and more Zairian medical personnel are taking over responsibility in the hospitals and health zones. There are Zairian doctors at Bolobo, Pimu and Yakusu. They face many pressures, including the desire to provide good education for their children which often involves expense and separation as they send their children to larger centres. At Yakusu, missionary nurses have been handing over responsibility to Zairian colleagues and a Zairian nurse has been appointed Director of the Nursing School.

The Zairian Department of Health is tightening up on qualifications for incoming medical personnel. It is likely that

our doctors and nurses will need some extra specialized courses, after basic training and experience, before being authorized to work in Zaire.

Staff at Bolobo were weary after fighting the cholera epidemic for seven months. Plans are going ahead at Pimu for the modernization of the hospital, nursing school and rural health office. Emergency repairs to one block have enabled it to be used again. Stephen Rusk, a water engineer, has started some of the work on the Hospital Water Supply Scheme.

Representatives of the participating church communities and associated mission boards linked with the Evangelical Medical Institute (IME) at Kimpese, met during the year. They defined the role and future development of medical services in the Region and considered how IME could serve the churches' medical work over a wider area.

The CBFZ Medical Co-ordinator has asked BMS for help to combat AIDS. The money will be used to diminish the possibility of infection by improved sterilization methods and to provide education about the facts of the disease.

◆ Nurses' Retreat

ONE of the major events at Pimu recently has been a retreat for the nurses.

'The speaker, Cit Kondo from the Hospital Christian Fellowship, was an extremely dynamic and gifted speaker,' said Dr Adrian Hopkins.

'The retreat took place over three days and became an event for the whole mission. Some folk came in from the village. Many folk committed or re-committed themselves to Christ.

'The result has been particularly important amongst our nursing students. Several of them have been baptized and the Nurses' Bible Study has taken on a new lease of life.

'We praise God for the interest shown and we pray that the new Christians will grow and mature in their faith. Dr Montingea, our new Zairian doctor, and Cit Ejeje, our Hospital Accountant, are leading the Bible Study and are seeking to follow up this work.'

◆ Lisala

SINGING by the ladies' choir from Lisala Baptist church, Kinshasa, was one of the highlights of the 1987 Baptist Assembly in Bradford. It heralded the beginning of a tour of Baptist churches covering England, Wales and Scotland. Everywhere they went, they were greeted enthusiastically. Normally staid British congregations swayed to the infectious African rhythms.

'It is good to experience at first hand the fruits of over one hundred years' of BMS work in Africa,' they said. 'It is good to come face to face with people from the church in Zaire.'

Back in Zaire, the choir went round the churches of Kinshasa to tell of their adventures. For the Baptist Community of the River Zaire (CBFZ), the choir's visit expressed a two-way partnership and they have thanked the BMS for the financial help that made it possible.

Dr Stephen Green, IME, Kimpese



ANGOLA

ALIVE TO THE GREAT COMMISSION

IT is possible to live in Luanda and not realize that there is a war on. Life seems to go on much as usual. People struggle to find transport to get to work. They man offices, factories or the oil refinery. They buy and sell. They fish, mend nets or boats, or laze on the beach.

However, a second glance reveals a more sombre side of life. Soldiers on crutches, wounded in the war, practise walking. Soldiers with rifles search a street to conscript 15-18 year old boys. Soldiers at a road-block on the outskirts of the city advise vehicles travelling inland to travel in convoy

with a military escort. People who want to travel to Mbanza Kongo (San Salvador) or Uige do so mainly by air.

◆ *The Economy*

The government provides the basic commodities of life in state run People's Stores. Each working person has a ration card, but even if there are two working people per family, there is still a need to supplement the diet with food from elsewhere. Fish is cheap and readily available, as are tomatoes and fruit, when in season.

Purchases can be made in the local markets at ten times the price they would be in government run stores. The women boycott the state markets, where little can be bought, in favour of their own, unofficial 'African' markets.

The production and export of coffee and diamonds has been disrupted by the war and it is oil that is saving the country from out and out bankruptcy.

◆ *Church and State*

The state recognizes nine Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic Church and the Kimbanguists. There is complete freedom of worship and religion, but open evangelism is prohibited and senior party officials are forbidden to attend church.

◆ *IEBA*

The Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA) is respected for its long history, its stance during the run-up to independence and its life and work today.

It is still mainly a regional church, ministering to those who live in the north, or who have come from the north to Luanda. It does a great shepherding job in the capital,

where there are ten parishes, enabling many to keep their faith amidst unsure surroundings.

They are, however, aware of the Great Commission to reach out to all people with the gospel and are involved in home mission. The story of pioneering and growth of the church in the Kwango area is thrilling.

The converts now need maturing to enable them to let their roots grow deep in Christ.

The leaders of IEBA are giving a strong direction to the Church. They want younger people and new converts to be aware of the recent history of the people, to be trained in Christian doctrine and to understand Baptist principles.

The Church has a large plot of land in each parish and the construction of churches or other buildings has already begun on most of them. IEBA has welcomed Colin Pavitt,

Derek Rumbol, Assistant Overseas Secretary and members of IEBA





Scene of Luanda

who will assist in the various building programmes as well as supervise the Church carpentry school in Luanda.

They also eagerly await the arrival of Jim and Pam Henn, who will be engaged in theological training. Because of the

political situation, their work will be based, for the time being, in Luanda.

The IEBA medical project has a good reputation which reaches far outside the boundaries of the Church.

ACROSS THE BORDER

THE people in one village in Northern Angola were so tired of being harassed over and over again, alternately, by the MPLA and by UNITA, and of being accused by both sides of helping the other side, that they decided to flee across the border into Zaire.

Once again the army entered the village to plunder and to punish. The village chief kept them talking.

'I will ask my wife to prepare a meal for you,' he said.

Going behind the hut he spoke softly and urgently to his wife.

'Quickly! Run into the forest and tell the others to go with you.'

They crept away while the chief kept the soldiers talking.

'Where are the others?' they asked.

'They're out in the forest gardens.'

While the soldiers went to search all the huts in the village to see if he was speaking the truth, the chief slipped away to join his wife and the villagers. It took them six weeks to get across the frontier.

ANGOLAN QUOTATIONS

ONE Christian, who held a senior post in the Angolan Ministry of Defence, was forced to make a choice.

'You cannot serve two masters,' he was told by the authorities.

'Quite right,' he said.

He chose his Master, Jesus Christ, and resigned from his job.

THE influence of the exile in neighbouring Zaire from 1961-75 is very evident in IEBA. Not so long ago a young people's music group was leading a service.

'During the colonial war the Church was destroyed,' declared one member of the group.

'Say only that the buildings were destroyed,' replied the Rev Alvaro Rodrigues, General Secretary of IEBA, quickly jumping to his feet.

'The Church lives on! The Church is in the hearts of people rather than in buildings.'

'HOW valuable it is to feel that you belong to a worldwide Christian family through the BMS and the Baptist World Alliance.

'How necessary it is for young people and young government ministers to know the history of IEBA and its worldwide links.'

Rev Alvaro Rodrigues

BRAZIL

EVANGELISM & SOCIAL CONCERN

AT one level, Brazil's problems can be summed up as international usury, national corruption and personal greed. Economic chaos and political inertia have generated tension and uncertainty.

The preparation of yet another constitution has diverted attention from more pressing issues. Social and personal violence is on the increase. The reduced investment in basic health programmes has led to a resurgence of malaria, yellow fever and other diseases. AIDS is an increasing problem and Brazil has one of the highest indices amongst developing countries. Infant mortality, particularly in the North East, is one of the largest in South America.

Porto Alegre Evangelism Students



◆ Church Planting

There is still a strong emphasis on evangelism and church planting in Brazil and several of our missionary families are involved in this ministry. Five churches were

handed into the care of Brazilian pastors by BMS missionaries during the year.

There is a strong emphasis on the Plan for National Evangelism. However, 'National Plans' of all kinds are increasingly being met with cynicism. There is a growing concern for the deepening of the church's spiritual life.

◆ Religion

There has been a growing interest in the occult and spiritism has been getting increasing publicity through television and magazines.

The Roman Catholic church continues to lose influence at a national level, though there are signs of an increased effectiveness at the grass roots through the basic ecclesiastical communities.

Evangelicals continue to grow but still do everything separately as much as they possibly can. Their growing numerical strength is making itself felt on the political arena. There are a significant number of evangelicals in the Congress and Senate. For the first time since the founding of the Baptist work in Brazil, a President of the Republic has been to the annual assembly meetings.



Stuart Christine at Second Baptist Church, Rondonopolis



Bible study with Margaret Swires

◆ Theological Education

In theological education, 1987 may well be seen as the year when the question of quantity came second to the question of quality. Those accustomed to the British system often find it difficult to adapt to one without any external control of standards. So often what is on the diploma becomes more important than what is in the head.

There is a continuing need for theologically trained teachers with the willingness to spend the necessary time in language and cultural adaptation.

◆ Social Service

Brazilian Baptists are more and more concerned for the church to express love and justice. This has opened up opportunities for ministry to the rural poor, the city slum dwellers, and the needy of every kind. BMS personnel are involved in various ministries of this kind:

Agricultural work — David and Joyce Stockley: Rural dispensary — Mary Parsons: City slums etc — Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite and Margaret Swires, and Gerry and Johan Myhill.

It is an area in which the opportunities are vast, yet the pitfalls are legion. As well as love there needs to be a cultural sensitivity and great wisdom.

◆ Servants

Some ministries cannot be classified, or overlap each other. Many of our missionaries are in servant roles responding to local needs as they arise and as requested by local churches, associations, state and national bodies.

Typical of this is the work of Eric and Jean Westwood. Eric is responsible for contacting, training, and the pastoral care of the

Mary Parsons working in Rural dispensary



Slum in Brazil

new missionaries offering to serve with the Brazilian World Missions Board.

During 1987 three BMS couples left Brazil and two new couples arrived.

CARIBBEAN

JAMAICA

Youth group, Jamaica



The work in Jamaica continues to be robust and vigorous. BMS involvement is mainly through the United Theological College of the West Indies where Keith Riglin works as tutor. His wife Jackie has been working as a physiotherapist in a nearby hospital.

Sheldon Dreusbury



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The work in Trinidad is weak. Although nearly half the island's population is of Indian descent, Baptists have hardly made any impact on this group of people.

The lay training programme has been reinitiated after a period of inactivity. The exact relationship of the BMS to the work there still needs to be discussed with the Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago.

Plans are being studied to plant the first Baptist church in Tobago.



Lady in Trinidad

EL SALVADOR

David Mee is doing language study in Guatemala. We look forward to his first reports on his activities in El Salvador. The

social and political situation is going to make the work there very challenging and will demand a special kind of missionary.



El Salvadorian family

◆ Conclusion

Looking to the future, all the areas in which the BMS works are open to missionaries. The opportunities are as varied as the gifts in the body of Christ. May God make us receptive to His word and obedient to His call.

TWO CONTRASTING ISLANDS

'HOW different Jamaica and Trinidad are,' writes John Clark after a recent visit. 'Jamaica, in many ways, is still very British, and in some, more British than the British. Baptist life is strong and vibrant.'

'I was there in National Heritage Week. Two of the five heroes remembered were Baptists. On TV I saw a dramatic reconstruction of the life of Sam Sharpe, a Baptist deacon, imprisoned and executed for his part in the revolt against slavery.'

'On the Sunday I was in Jamaica's old capital for the Heritage week service. Some things were so familiar and yet in many ways I felt more foreign than ever I've felt in Brazil. The hymn book, the form of service, the English idiom were so familiar. What made me feel so foreign? In part, I'm sure, it was being the only white person present in a congregation of nearly one thousand. But more, it was the recognition that here was a people with a united past, a common collective history in which words like liberty and freedom strike deep chords.'

'Trinidad is different. Baptist work is weak. The British influence is less apparent and, with 43 per cent of the population of Indian origin, there is a very strong Hindu influence. I was there for Divali, the Hindu festival of lights. The whole island was covered with candles and paraffin lamps.'

'It was as much a cultural affirmation as a spiritual. Trinidad is still trying to work out its identity, with strong influences from the USA, from South America and from India, as well as traditional links with Britain.'

'Oil and gas deposits brought wealth to the island, but the slump in prices has added to the many social problems.'

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

THE Baptist Friendship House at Campo Grande, the state capital of Mato Grosso do Sul, is helping many who live in the city's 60 or so squatter settlements, or *favelas*.

'WE need a police post, a health centre and a creche,' the Agonsa favela Association told Frank Gouthwaite.

So, along with the president, and other committee members, he visited various departments of the city council to try to have these needs met. What were the results? A school extension has been built and a health post has been promised.

The council does not build creches, but PRONAV, a semi-government organization, supports home creches. Dona Terezinha and Dona Cida each receive about seven children from other families into their two-roomed, earth-floored houses for twelve hours a day, five half-days per week. They receive food and £5 a month from PRONAV, and should receive £1 per month per child from the mothers, who are now

able to go out to work. Some mothers, however, have not even paid a minimal contribution.

'So it was wonderful to hear Terezinha say, in a Residents' Association meeting, that what the community most needs is the knowledge of Jesus,' said Frank Gouthwaite.

Obviously Margaret Swire's weekly visits to the creches, to play with the children and tell them Bible stories, is bearing fruit!

Favela children tend to do poorly at school. This is due to malnourishment, worms, absence through illness or the parents not bothering to send them, the parents' inability to help the children at home, mid-year moves made without an official transfer form, and moves to and from rural areas where there are no schools.

Often, ten or twelve year olds are still in the first year. To help, a reinforcement class was started at a preaching point of the Guanandi church. The local school refers children who are having difficulties, and about 20 have been helped during the year. Well over half 'passed' the year – better than average for favela children – without special difficulties.

Another way to help the learning process is to start early. In May, pre-school work was started in the Centenario congregation, with 25 children. Food was obtained from the Ministry of Education, who recognize that children who are underfed before school age don't learn so well when they start school at age seven. Five of the first group now move up, with a firm base on which to build.

Friendship House, Campo Grande, under construction



All lessons start with choruses, a Bible story and a prayer. Attendance has also grown at the respective Sunday schools.

Margaret and a local doctor have been doing health check-ups and regular observation of height, weight, etc. Margaret has also been able to help smaller, very malnourished, brothers and sisters to obtain special feeding supplements.

Throughout the year work went on, with the help of volunteers from both churches and community, to build a purpose-designed pre-school for the children of Aero Rancho II favela. Teaching began there in December.



Children at the Baptist Friendship House, Campo Grande, Brazil

SRI LANKA

PRECARIOUS AND UNCERTAIN

THE political situation on the island is still precarious and uncertain. The Colombo agreement signed in July has not brought the expected peace. In fact, the situation has become worse and many lives have been lost.

The Sinhala community makes up the largest section of the country's population of 15 million with 74 per cent. The Tamil group is divided into two sections. The Sri Lanka Tamils, 12.6 per cent, are descended from South Indian settlers left over from invasions 1,000-2,500 years ago. Indian Tamils descend from workers imported by the British 70-120 years ago to work on the tea plantations.

Sewing Class for deprived girls, Colombo, Sri Lanka



Peter Goodall, out visiting in Colombo



◆ *The Baptist Sangamaya*

The 175th Anniversary celebrations went off well and proved to be a means of encouragement and inspiration. It was heartening to see the good number of young people who attended the celebrations and this gives hope for the future.

The two BMS couples who were in Sri Lanka during the year, Peter and Margaret Goodall and George and Betsy Lee, have now left. One new couple has been appointed to serve on the island in lay training and at present there is a need for a ministerial couple to serve, short term, at Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church in Colombo.

At Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church, plans have been submitted to the municipality for a Community Service Centre on the church's compound. These have been approved and efforts are now being made to raise the finance needed. This project will add greatly to the church's community involvement.



The Goodalls at Cinnamon Gardens, Sri Lanka

◆ **STONE LAYING**

'THE stone laying for the new building at Kandy took place on December 14,' report George and Betsy Lee. 'Besides the stone laying itself, representatives of all the different arms of the church lit a lamp on the huge brass lampstand.'

'A Kandyan drummer and conch shell player heralded the occasion, with the main participants being welcomed by an archway of young light-green coconut leaves beside a large, stylised, multi-coloured floral design on the ground. We had watched some of our members making this earlier, filling in an outline design with scraped coconut in contrasting bright colours, black, white, yellow and red.'

'One heartening aspect was the participation of leaders from the two outreach villages. This was the first time that Gunasena, from Gondenikanda, had come to Kandy and was able to meet many of our leaders and members who had not yet been to his village.'

◆ **INDIA**

OPPOSITION & GROWTH

SINCE independence 40 years ago the quality of life for the people of India has improved considerably. Life expectancy is now in the mid-50s compared with 30. Literacy has more than doubled to over a third of the population, and economically the country is able, most years, to export grain. Although there have been many

political crises, India remains a strong democratic nation. However, there is still a great deal of room for improvement and many are calling for it, especially in the rural areas.

Sadly there has been an increase in the number of clashes between different castes and religious groups. Whilst the Sikh problem has been catching the headlines, our partner Christians in the Phulbani district of Orissa have felt the pressure of opposition from a militant Hindu group.

◆ *The Church*

It is in this context that the Church in India has to live and work.

'Caste and castism present a social evil and a formidable barrier to the Gospel,' wrote Dr Roger E Hedlund, Co-ordinator of the Church Growth Association of India.

'Some 200 million seek liberation from grinding poverty and exploitation. Religious extremist groups offer inducements and practise deception and violence in an effort to coerce the under-privileged to embrace Hinduism.'

'The unreached are a major challenge. A vigorous missionary movement is developing among Indian Christians. In 1963 there were 148 Indian missionaries. Today there are about 4,200 making India the largest non-Western missionary "sending" country in the world.'

◆ *Church of North India*

The number of expatriate missionaries working with the CNI is becoming fewer each year. In the middle of 1987 there were



only 58 compared with 107 four years previously.

The Rev Desmond and Mrs Sheila Samuels have been transferred from the Cathedral Church of the Redemption in New Delhi to St Stephen's Hospital where Desmond is now chaplain. Sheila has been given various responsibilities and is enjoying her work.

The Rev Geoffrey and Mrs Elsie Grose are organising a programme of Lay Training for the diocese. This now means that they

have been relieved of some of their responsibilities at Green Park Free Church, New Delhi.

In Cuttack, community unrest and religious fanaticism have caused real problems in the diocese. At Berhampur, Ganjam District and in the Phulbani District of Orissa, there have been disturbances and damage to churches. The area has quietened down now, but there are still times of tension. In spite of everything, the Church continues to grow in the Kond Hills and in the Ganjam District.



India's younger generation

◆ Serampore

In January 1987, Miss Maureen Sleeman, Chairman of the BMS, represented the Society at a service of dedication of the Carey memorial. Representatives from various sections of the Church in India and overseas as well as diplomats were also present.

◆ Buni

Steps are being taken to alter the constitution so that there will be a greater sharing in the leadership of the Baptist Union of North India. Hopefully this will help to relieve some of the tensions and disagreements which have marred the Union in recent years.

◆ Mizoram

Neil and Marjorie McVicar visited Mizoram in December 1986. Because of government restrictions, this was the first time for many years that representatives from the BMS had been able to go into the state.

The Mizoram Baptist Church is very much alive and, apart from engaging in evangelistic work in Mizoram, has missionaries working in other parts of India and in Thailand.

Heavy rain caused a landslide and damaged the new Baptist House buildings in Aizawl. The BMS has made a contribution from the Relief Fund to help with repairs and to construct a retaining wall.

◆ Bengal Baptist Union

Many of the churches in this Union do not have properly trained and full-time pastors. This, linked with quarrels and divisions, has led to a weakening of the witness in West Bengal.

◆ BMS Calcutta Office

Mr John Peacock, Secretary of the Circular Road Baptist is the BMS Secretary for Missionary Affairs in India. He and his wife also look after the Calcutta Office and Guest House. John Peacock and Mr Archie

Edwards, the legal and property adviser, were able to visit Mission House for discussion and consultation and to attend the meeting of General Committee in November.

BANGLADESH

POOR YET MAKING MANY RICH

BANGLADESH depends economically on the aid given by many countries and the International Monetary Fund. There is not enough land left to support the increasing numbers of people. Four out of every five Bangladeshis have diets that do not meet minimum calorie requirements.

The disastrous floods last year only made the problem worse, making many homeless and destroying acres of crops. The Bangladesh Baptist Sangha (BBS) played a significant part in helping the victims of the

floods through its Emergency Relief Operation Committee. It was assisted, in part, by a grant from the BMS Relief Fund to which Operation Agri made a significant contribution.

Politically, there has been increasing opposition to President Ershad and his government. There have been many processions and strikes calling for him to step down. The recent elections were boycotted by the opposition parties.

Flood scene in Bangladesh



◆ *Missionaries*

One or two of our BMS personnel have had difficulties in getting visas renewed. Also several missionaries will be returning home for furlough or retirement in 1988. This will cause a number of problems including the administration of the BMS Dhaka office and the supervision of the Guest House.

◆ *BBS Headquarters*

The first phase of the new headquarters buildings has been completed and BBS staff have moved in. The new building will be a great asset to the Sangha and will aid communication between the various departments. The Sangha is very grateful to the BMS for financial help towards the project.

◆ *Chandraghona*

Dr Chowdhury, the Medical Director of Chandraghona Hospital, has been unwell, which has added to Bob Hart's responsibilities. The future leadership of the hospital is causing some concern. Dr Chowdhury retires in two or three years' time, and apart from Dr Hart, there is no other suitable senior Christian doctor.

Both the Harts and the Kerrigans will be home on furlough in 1988, so Sue Headlam will be the only BMS 'medic' at Chandraghona later in the year. Alison Cottam is continuing her language study.

The most notable visitor to Chandraghona in 1987 was the Duke of Gloucester. He



New BBS Headquarters, Dhaka, Bangladesh

was very impressed by the work of the hospitals.

◆ *Rangpur*

The Bible Teaching and Reading programme in this area, organised by Gwyn and Joyce Lewis, has been a source of real encouragement. It has been good to see the enthusiasm of some of the groups and to witness the benefit both to individuals and churches.

◆ *Dinajpur*

It has not been an easy year at Dinajpur. Clashes of personalities and problems that have got out of perspective have created a very bad atmosphere in the Mission Compound. A planned visit by the officers of the Sangha to try to bring about reconciliation, was frustrated by the floods in the area.

◆ *Ruhea*

Jean Pullin has been in Ruhea watching over the work at the clinic during Dr Suzanne Roberts' furlough.

◆ *School for Blind Girls*

This is going well under the principal, Mrs Monju Samaddar, who succeeded Veronica Campbell when she returned to the UK. In October a new Recreational Centre was opened by the British High Commissioner. This is going to be a great asset to the school.

◆ *Shed Board*

The Social, Health, Economic Development Board, the social development arm of the BBS, is meeting some of the needs of the community. A self-help programme is assisting people in rural areas to improve their economic condition. Another is giving professional training to unemployed youth.

There are programmes to provide primary education, to supply capital for the landless so that they can set up businesses, to train people in farming, to provide general and technical assistance for fish rearing and to help tribal groups to consider their future.

At Rangpur, villagers are being shown how silkworms can provide an alternative source of income and at Dinajpur 20 displaced tribal families have been provided with accommodation.



Gwyn and Joyce Lewis on village visit

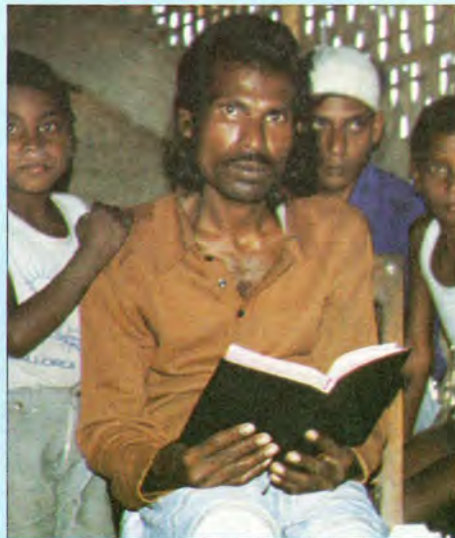
READING THE BIBLE TOGETHER

THE long-term aim of the Bible-reading programme at Rangpur is the emergence of Bible-based churches able to stand on their own feet. The 'method' is simple. We sit with an interested group and read the Bible together. Those who can read share the reading. Use of pictures helps non-readers to listen. Simple questions help understanding of the content. Finally the message of the passage is applied to their everyday situation. Non-readers stay afterwards for reading classes using a Bible-oriented literacy course.

Response has varied. In some places the seed fell by the wayside of indifference. One congregation started enthusiastically but quickly wilted. Another went very well until quarrels and lies split the group apart.

But some seed fell on good ground. One family with hostile non-Christian relatives have, despite their weaknesses, been encouraged to stand firm. In another village a women's group continues in spite of the

ups and downs and a number can now read God's word with understanding. In another place a man who had followed a Bible correspondence course invited us to his village. There is now a new church –



Bible study in a village near Rangpur

only four members, two men and their wives, but thriving and witnessing to their neighbours and relatives. Calls come from other new places – but how to respond?

In Rangpur town the Baptist congregation is the only Christian church. A weekly Bible-class here has only attracted those on the Mission compound (seven out of the total of sixteen church families).

BMS missionaries over the years have participated in the annual 'New Life Convention', attended by Christians from seven districts and four denominations. Many lives have been blessed despite opposition regularly by the Enemy. The aim is new life in the churches. But will it continue without missionaries? Pray with us that God will raise up men and women to stand in the gap.

NEPAL

THE ECONOMY of Nepal is dominated by agriculture which, together with forestry and fishing, contributes more than 60 per cent of the country's wealth, provides employment for over 90 per cent of the active population, and accounts for more than 90 per cent of exports.

One third of the country is still covered by forests, but although there is vast potential for hydro-electric power, the country lacks many natural resources. One area of growth is the tourist industry.



Local woman at work, Nepal

In the mid-50s the government ended Nepal's isolation from the rest of the world and began a series of five year plans. Progress, however, is handicapped by the country's land-locked position and Nepal relies heavily on foreign grants and loans.

Nepal is a Hindu kingdom, and there have been moves recently to strengthen the position of that religion in the country. There appears to have been no lessening of the pressure and persecution of Christians and at the end of 1987 there were five Christians in prison and about 100 awaiting trial or on bail.

It was good to welcome the Rev Robert Karthak to 93 Gloucester Place last year. He is pastor of the largest church in Kathmandu and a very respected leader within the Nepali Church.

Typical Nepalese house



Gandaki Boarding School



◆ *The United Mission to Nepal*

There are 418 missionaries working with the UMN. They come from 20 different countries and are supported by 37 member bodies, including the BMS.

Richard Cameron teaches at the Gandaki Boarding School at Pokhara which is Nepal's first Regional School. During the Principal's absence on furlough, Richard has been the Acting Principal.

Girls have now been admitted to the school and during 1987 there were 37 girl boarders. This encouragement of girls' education is an important development and ensures that now both girls and boys will be offered an English-medium, Cambridge International Examination education.

REAL LIFE WITH JAGGED EDGES

Tim Lehane



'That's what it's like,' says Tim Lehane, who has nearly completed three years in Nepal, 'but it's a great experience.'

MISSION work spans many activities, and I'm involved in the 'development' work undertaken by the United Mission to Nepal in order to 'Minister to the people of Nepal in the name and spirit of Christ'.

I am a mechanical engineer with the Andhikhola Hydro and Rural Electrification Project. We are tunnelling through a mountain to join two rivers, using energy from falling water to generate electricity, as well as to irrigate land. I look after the maintenance department responsible for the machinery used during this construction phase of the project.

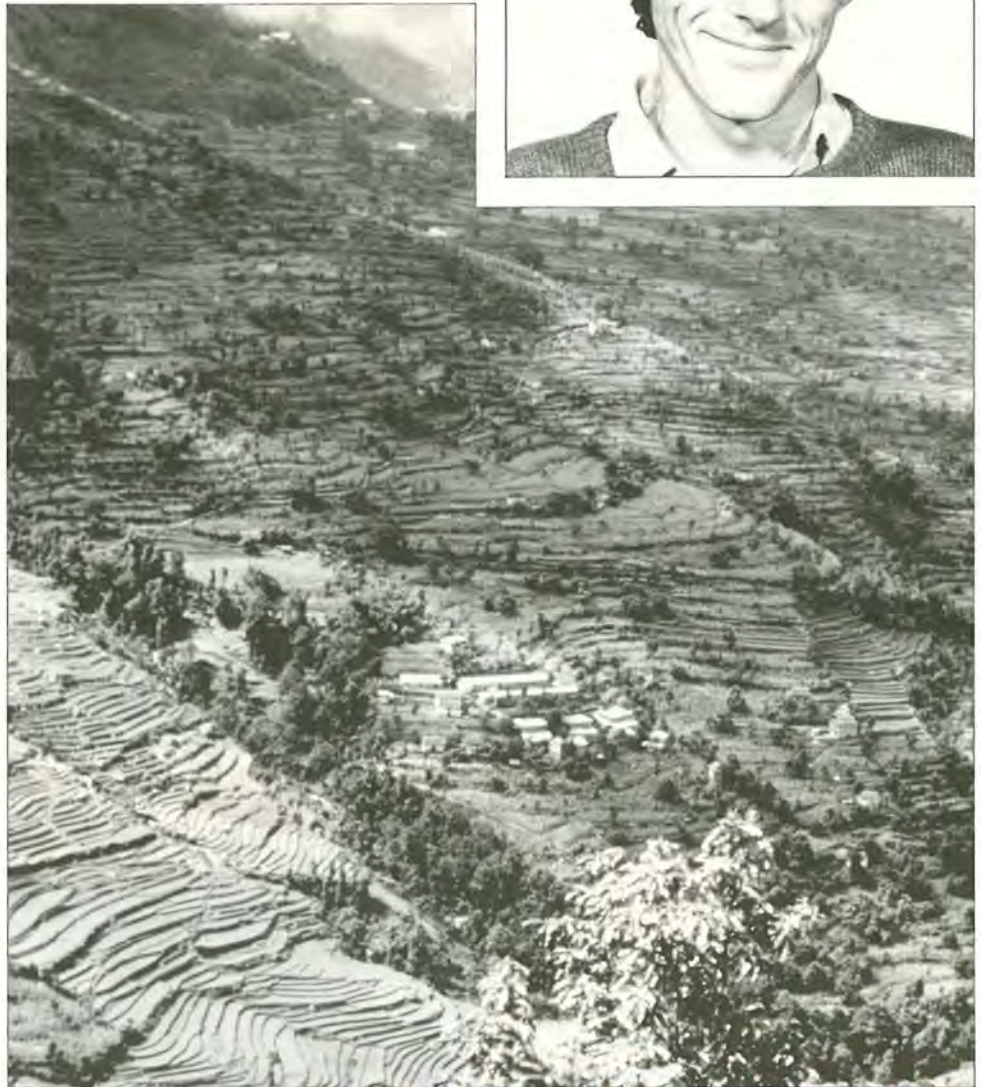
How are we 'ministering to Nepal'? We are not simply building a power plant, and providing electricity. We want people to learn skills in order to build Nepal, as well as feed themselves. The population is increasing in true Asian style, but the cultivated land is not, and if anything it is decreasing from soil erosion.

Not everyone can be a farmer, and so some kind of industrial development will have to be part of Nepal's future. Anyone who has seen these Nepali hills and rivers can see that hydropower, and therefore tunnelling, is one of Nepal's most obvious paths forward.

Development has a tendency to favour the better off in society, so we are taking steps to distribute electricity, as well as irrigation water, in ways that give poorer people a chance.

But where in all this is evangelism and church involvement? 'Are you a missionary or aren't you?'

I could write about the small group of Nepali Christians, the local people and those who come here with the project. I could talk of the 'catalyst effect' that we expatriates have in bringing far flung Christians together to meet, for teaching and mutual encourage-



Nepal Landscape showing terraces up mountain sides

ment. I could talk of witnessing opportunities at work, among young Hindus who, just like so many in the UK, are going through the motions of religion without any real sense of God. All of this is true, but it is still not the starting point of mission.

I choose to build on a firmer foundation. That is Christ. God wants me to be more like Christ. Christ was a servant here on earth. He was much more than that, but at least I also can be a servant. It makes sense to serve where there is greatest need, and hence I ended up in Nepal.

I don't have to be here, but I stay because I love these Nepali people and want to work with them, to serve them. This is one way of

being a little like Christ, and this is God's means of persuasion. A Christian not only brings the Good News, but in some way is part of the news itself. That is why I say service first, my responsibility before God, and then all else follows, the talking, explaining, answering questions, in my day to day life.

It is a life of extremes out here, for soaring elation to depths of deep despair, but it's great to experience such real life, with all its jagged edges. I'm not sure of lots of things, but I'm sure I'm alive! I definitely recommend the 'missionary experience' to anyone who feels they are growing numb at the edges.'

CHINA

WITNESSING BY WORD & DEED



Street scene, China

Church in Beijing, China

'The church is alive and well in China. Under God's care it has grown phenomenally over the past 38 years,' reports Bishop Ting.

THERE are between three and four million Protestant Christians in China today. They include those who worship in over 4,000 church buildings and in tens of thousands of homes or meeting points, which are frequently, but inaccurately, referred to abroad as *house churches*.

This means that, since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the church's growth has been at least twice as fast as the nation's population growth. But we are still fewer than half of one per cent of the total population.

Why is this? First of all the Gospel of Salvation in Jesus Christ is just as valid and needed in a socialist society as in any other.



Secondly, more people are open to and willing to hear and accept what the Gospel has to say to them when the church ceases to be an appendage from abroad and speaks the Word of God in its local context. Thirdly, it is sufficient if a government will just recognize the right of religion to exist

and to organize its work. Finally, Chinese Christians are responding actively to the call that they bear witness to Christ by word and deed wherever they are.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FRATERNAL VISITS

The feelings of Christian love and fellowship become more lively and meaningful when we visit our fellow believers in another country and get an opportunity of worshipping the Lord together. It is a wonderful and memorable occasion when East and West meet together expressing and exchanging the love of Christ between one another.



Dr Suna

SO wrote Dr Dalganjan Suna of Diptipur, Orissa, India, after his return home from a fraternal visit to England.

As a skilled doctor and committed Christian he had much to share as he visited old friends and made many new ones from Scotland to the South of England.

There are no longer any BMS missionaries in his area but he is keen that the rising generation of Christians in both his churches and ours do not forget the links that we have and the heritage that we share.

Each year BMS tries to offer the opportunity and to provide the means for Christian leaders, like Dr Suna, from other countries, to visit our homes and churches. Our overseas visitors usually pack a great variety of experiences into the time they are here – such as courtesy calls on the home Baptist Unions, visits to our Colleges, Association Assemblies and speaking engagements arranged by our Area Representatives.



Paritosh Biswas

The Rev Paritosh Biswas, General Secretary of the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha (union) was another welcome guest last year. He toured extensively, shared in many deputation programmes, held talks with BMS Secretaries and addressed the Society's General Committee.

Other friends travel on BMS Scholarships to extend their knowledge, gain additional qualifications and prepare themselves for future ministry in their home lands. Almost two dozen Christian leaders took advantage of such opportunities the last year.

The Rev Sam Suriyagoda, a quietly spoken Sri Lankan pastor, gained an MA in Islamic Studies at Birmingham University. His wife Rita, took an advanced Diploma in Religious Education at Westhill College with a special interest in religious teaching for slow learning children.

Pastor Jurandir de Costa Marques returned to Mato Grosso in Brazil after two years at Spurgeon's College but he hasn't finished with College life – he is now principal of the Baptist Seminary in Cuiabá. His compatriot, Mauro Clementino da Silva, is undertaking an in-depth study of eschatology as it relates to the mission of the church. Mauro and his wife Mariza will not only take back

academic results from their time here, their British born son Andre will be a constant reminder of the time they were scholarship holders.

Another Brazilian couple, Pastor Manoel Xavier and his wife Clenir have a particular interest in Christian ethics and family therapy. Clenir is a graduate social worker adding to her experience and qualifications in order to head up a church-based counselling ministry upon their return home.

Of course, we don't expect every scholarship holder to come to Britain. The reason may be that of language, but more often it is the appropriateness of the course on offer that takes, for instance, a pastor from Zaire to Switzerland or France, and Angolan ministers to the Cameroons or Portugal.

Bangladeshis may head to the Philippines or South Korea, or to a Christian hospital in India.

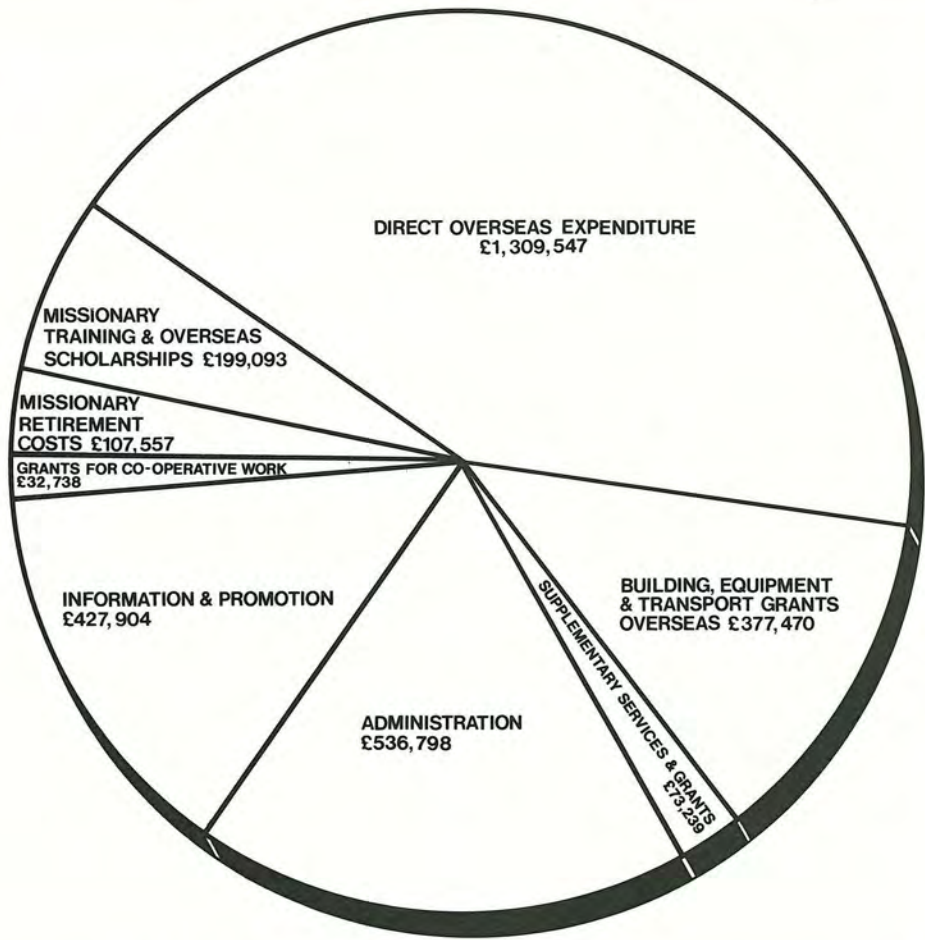
The Rev Chuni Mondal, taking a Doctor of Ministry course at Baguio City in the Philippines, chose a most relevant project aiming to develop a programme for increasing pastoral leadership among the churches of his home area. He planned to interview every church member to prompt their awareness of Christian stewardship and to challenge them about God's call to the pastoral ministry.

Usually the BMS underwrites the total support of our scholarship holders, but sometimes we join forces with other British mission agencies to support special study or research. During the current year we contribute to the support of a Nepali Christian at Oxford and a young Chinese lady researching missionary history as it relates to her homeland.

So, in the past twelve months, we have helped 23 overseas Christians, a number of them with their families, to broaden their horizons and engage in some reverse flow of mission. They come from nine different countries. They have studied here and in eight other lands. Their courses have ranged from hospital management to research into Christian communication. As they receive much from these opportunities they undoubtedly give much to us in the sharing of fellowship, the cross-fertilization of ideas and, not least, in growing friendship, Christian love and prayerful interest.

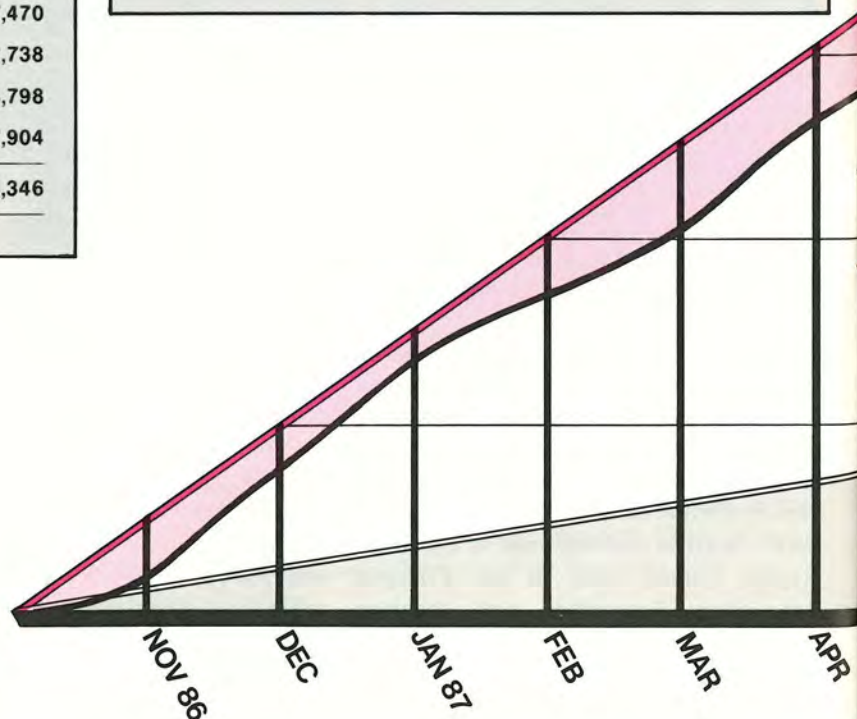
WHAT DO YOU WANT OF US?

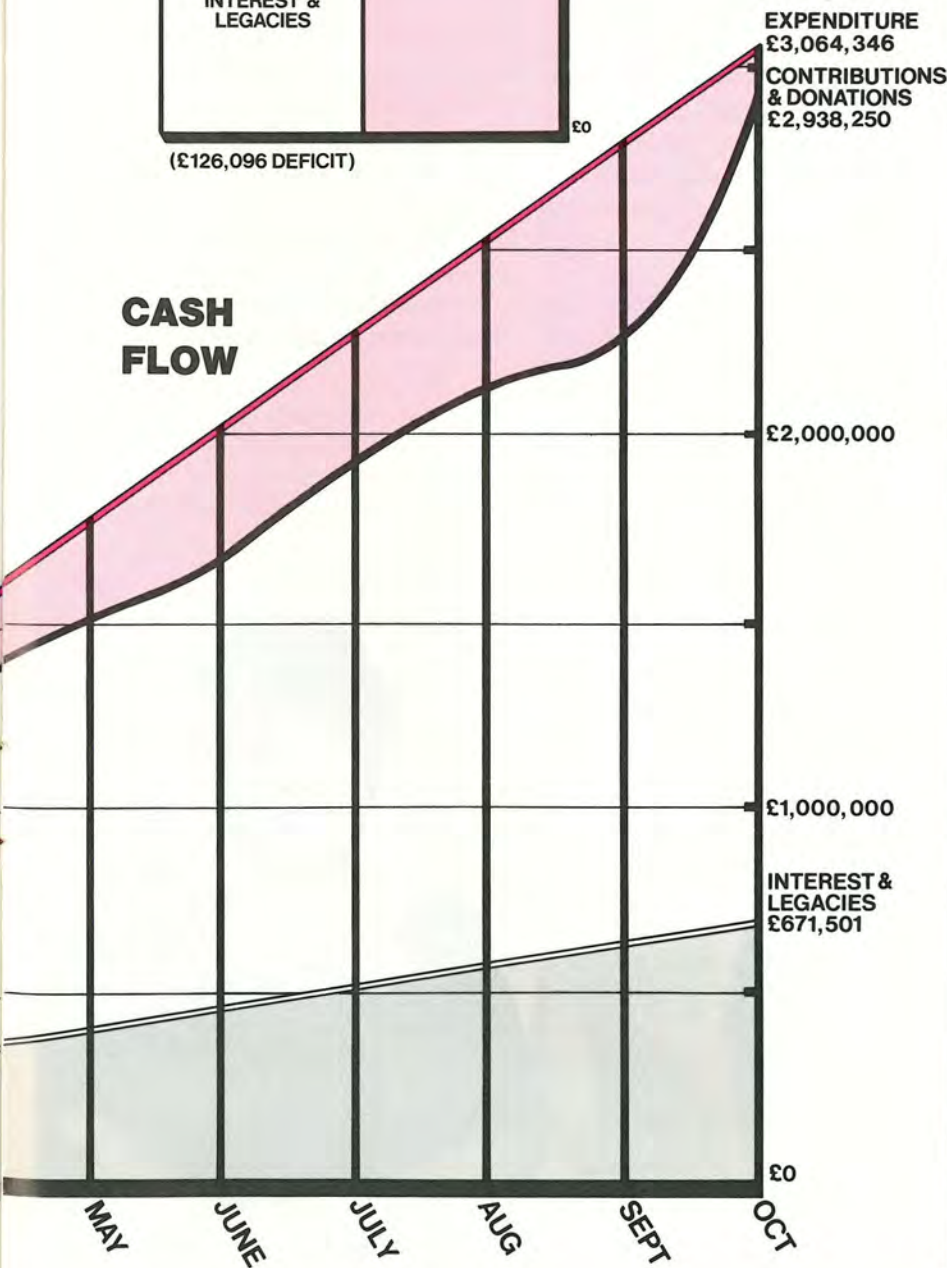
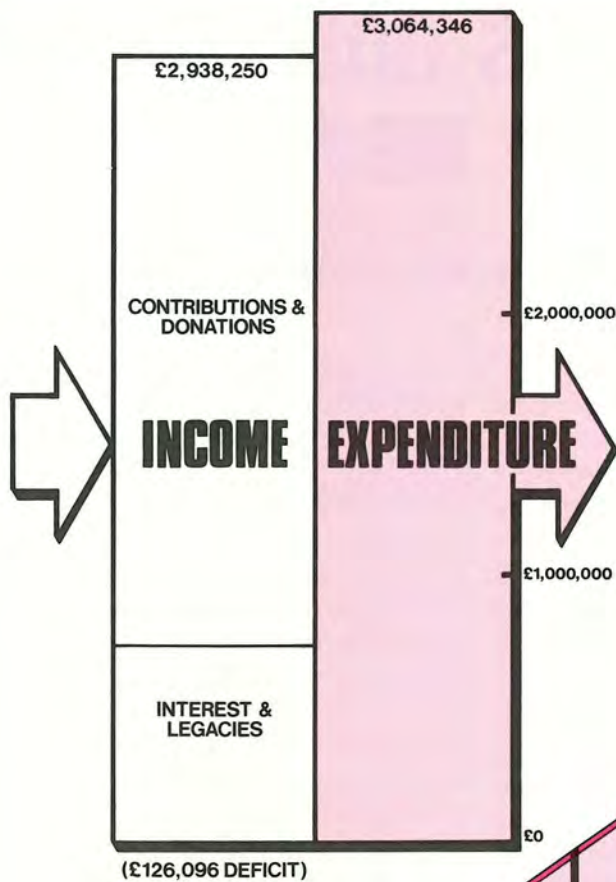
That's the first question we ask of God. Our priority then is to obey his answer in faith that the resources needed will be provided by our Baptist churches.



1986	EXPENDITURE	1987
1,243,758	Direct Overseas Expenditure	1,309,547
91,610	Training of Missionaries	124,010
60,635	Scholarships for Overseas Personnel	199,093
123,005	Missionary Retirement Costs	107,557
71,724	Supplementary Services and Grants	73,239
240,000	Building, Equipment and Transport Grants	377,470
31,970	Grants for Co-operative work	32,738
522,983	Administration	536,798
360,539	Information and Promotion	427,904
<u>2,746,232</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>3,064,346</u>

1986	INCOME	1987
2,155,831	Contributions and Donations	2,266,749
570,954	Interest, Dividends and Legacies	671,501
<u>2,726,785</u>	Total Income	<u>2,938,250</u>
19,447	From Reserves	126,096





THE churches have given generously to the work of world mission through the BMS. Last year, gifts from churches and individuals increased by 5.1 per cent.

'This compares favourably with the giving to other societies,' BMS Treasurer, Arthur Garman told the March General Committee meeting. 'But it is less than the ten per cent we asked for.'

Giving was £2,266,749. Other income from investments and legacies increased by 17.5 per cent to £671,501 bringing the total income to £2,938,250. However, the Society spent £3,064,346 and ended up with a deficit of £126,000.

'We have, in fact, underspent on our budget,' Mr Garman said. 'Fluctuations in exchange rates and other factors, gave us a saving of £51,000 on our overseas expenditure. Savings were made in other departments too so that overall we saved £100,504. If we had spent in line with our estimates the deficit would have been twice as big.'

'Yet new missionaries are being trained and going overseas into new areas. We've entered into a new work in El Salvador. We've increased missionary allowances, but we have had to dip into our reserves in order to meet our expenditure.'

Mr Lawson has managed to balance his budget,' Mr Garman said, 'Maybe we could use our tax reductions to help balance the BMS budget.'

Baptists need to beat inflation when they set targets for their giving. That was the implication of remarks made by a member of the BMS General Committee in March.

'We should set targets which are not fixed to inflation,' he said.

'When God sets a target that is higher than inflation, we must meet it.'

WHAT DOES GOD WANT OF ME?



Joan Maple

– that's a question Joan Maple, BMS Personnel Secretary, often gets asked

business before beginning their training for Zaire. A physiotherapist, a woman doctor and a pharmacy technician are in their last weeks at busy hospitals before preparing, two for Chandraghona and one for Zaire. A teacher for Zaire is in his last term at school, as is a school matron hoping to go to Nepal.

During the year we accepted 38 people for service ranging in age from Mary, a mother, secretary and the builder's wife at 24, to Harold, at 61 going to Nepal with his wife Barbara, both to teach. Nine were teachers, six medical people, one agricultural couple, three pastoral couples and one single pastor (going to El Salvador, a new departure), an engineer and a carpenter.

Some of these, plus those from last year still in training, are part of the St Andrew's Hall

family, at Selly Oak. Others are in Massy, near Paris, or in Brussels working at their French, and one pastoral couple is learning Portuguese in Lisbon, preparing for ministry in Angola. It's all happening!

It all begins in that small office, but not really! It's a delight and a privilege to share with people the way God has been leading them, some over many years, into training and experience that will prepare them for this time.

Here too is evidence of God's unseen footprints. We believe we are being led by those same footprints into new areas of work – in Thailand and France, and there are those preparing to offer for work in these countries. It's an exciting time as we try to follow where we believe God is leading.

THE small office on the first floor of Mission House, labelled 'CANDIDATE SECRETARY', has seen a constant stream of people this year, coming in to talk about missionary service. Only about one in ten will go overseas, but all are facing a time of challenge about the future.

'What does God want for my life?'

'Is it possible I'm being called into missionary work?'

'How can my experience fit into an overseas setting?'

On the office wall there is a palm tree poster, where the little monk – Abraham on this one – hears a voice from heaven saying, 'Go to the land that I will show you.' He asks a whole list of questions.

'Where is it?' (reasonable!).

'How do I get there? What are my prospects? Will Sarah like it?' He gets no answers to these questions, which are seen on the ground all around him.

The right hand corner shows him trudging off the edge of the poster, with his questions over his shoulder, remarking, 'It's hard being a disciple with all these question marks!'

For many who come in to talk, the questions can't all be answered and won't be till they've taken the plunge in following God's leading.

At the end of 1987 38 people had been accepted as candidates of the society. Not all have started their preparation for service. A builder and his wife are winding up their

Harold and Barbara Blake





David Perry

MISSIONARY TRAINING AT SELLY OAK

as experienced by David Perry

WHAT and where is Selly Oak? It is a part of Birmingham and is the location for the Selly Oak Colleges. Most BMS missionaries spend some time here, in St. Andrew's Hall, preparing to serve abroad.

There are Anglican, Methodist and Quaker colleges as well as St Andrew's, which is co-sponsored by BMS, the URC/Presbyterian Church and the Council for World Mission.

People from overseas also attend the colleges, doing courses in English Language, Communication Studies, Pastoral Studies, Development Studies, or Islamic Studies.

Coming into such a cosmopolitan community was quite a shock. Living in Cornwall, I had hardly seen an African before let alone talked to one!

Here we all live in the same place, eating and socializing together. There are brothers and sisters in Christ from all around the world. Peavl, is a 17 stone Bulgarian with his heart on fire for the Lord. He might not speak much English yet, but he wants everyone to know about his faith in Jesus.

Then there are two pastors from Ghana, Johnson and Bakar, tall and very athletic. Lee Ying from China and Duangkae from Thailand have small delicate oriental features. Rosiam from Burma and Joseph from India have testimonies of how the church is growing and people's lives are being transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

All the students here have a testimony of the work of God's grace in their lives and the joy of being able to serve Him.



St Andrew's Hall

In Britain we often feel pessimistic about our faith. The Church is largely in decline and many congregations are dwindling. Yet from our overseas friends at Selly Oak we are learning of a God who is doing great things through the Church, and people are excited and looking forward to the future. We in the West could well learn from their enthusiasm for the gospel.

The teaching on 'mission' is mostly done in a central teaching block, with students from all the colleges joining together for lectures. It is good to mix people of such differing religious backgrounds and traditions because it broadens our understanding of the universal church. Before I came here I

knew nothing of the Orthodox Church or Mennonites, or for that matter that black indigenous churches are growing rapidly in Africa.

Each tradition has a different perspective on God and Jesus to enrich our own understanding of the gospel. Yet alongside this enrichment it is apparent that Selly Oak is designed to challenge the basic assumptions of each person's faith and make us question more deeply.

Selly Oak has highlighted for me the fact that the very purpose of mission is fiercely debated between those of different traditions.

CANDIDATES

THE FRENCH Connexion will soon be a reality. The BMS General Committee has accepted two couples to work with the French Baptist Federation. Another couple have also been accepted to be the first BMS workers in Thailand. In all, seven new missionaries have been appointed.

Almost two years after the Baptist Missionary Society responded to the French Baptists' call to 'come over and help' John and Sue Wilson will be making the short trip across the Channel from their home in Cornwall. Sue Wilson, who comes from London, worked for several years with Campus Crusade. John, the son of former BMS missionaries in Zaire, is team minister at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Falmouth. They have been married for three years.

'We are enthusiastic to share the gospel with those who have no present opportunity of hearing it,' they say. 'Although there is a much to do in Britain, the resources are there to make the gospel available to every person. In comparison with the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association, where we are now involved, there are about the same number of Baptist Churches in the whole of France with about one third less in membership.'

'We have to overcome the language barrier and share the gospel with Europe. We have an EEC-type mountain of ministers in this country and we need to share our resources with the rest of Europe.'

John and Sue Wilson

John and Sue will be leaving Falmouth to start language school at Massy, Paris, in September. They are expecting their first child and wonder if they will be able to take their dog with them!

The Devon and Cornwall Association is contributing another couple to the French Baptist Federation. Neil and Ruth Abbott are members of Upton Vale Baptist Church, Torquay.

'Since we became Christians, we've always considered the possibility of full-time service and from the time we married in 1983 God began to convince us that He had a specific job for us. We went to Moorlands Bible College, expecting to work in this

country, because we didn't feel called to work abroad,' they said.

Later they realised they were putting more emphasis on how they 'felt' rather than on what God wanted.

'From this moment on, we began to be challenged about France. Hardly the outpost of civilisation, but definitely just as needy. We were constantly confronted with France, in conversation, missionary speakers, documentaries on TV and even by bumping into a crowd of French students. These coincidences we believed to be the prodding of God's Spirit. This was confirmed by the support and encouragement of the Pastors and Elders of Upton Vale.'

'As we look into the future, we are filled with a mixture of emotions ranging from sheer terror to excitement. We are frightened because we know it will be difficult to work in France. It will be hard to leave our families and friends here,



especially with our little girl, Hannah, only recently born. Yet we are excited at the thought of living and working in a place where God has led us.'

Neil and Ruth will be getting some experience working pastorally in an urban situation in Britain before leaving for France in 1990-91.

Geoffrey and Christine Bland, of Frimley Baptist Church, are now preparing to be the first BMS couple to go to Thailand. They will be engaged in church planting and pastoral work.

Neil and Ruth Abbott

Geoffrey has been part of the ministerial team and Camberley and Frimley since leaving Spurgeon's College in 1980. He originally comes from New Barnet Baptist Church where he was baptised. Christine was baptised at Walton Baptist Church and has been involved in social and community work, play groups and mothers and toddlers groups. They have two children. They will be doing two terms of training at St Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak, before going on to language training in Thailand.

Alison Maclean, from Clifton, Nottingham, is currently involved in a lay ministry with the United Reformed Church particularly doing church related community work.

'The challenges and aspects of mission, which lie in being called to go overseas, exist in a similar way in the work I am doing now,' she says. 'The move overseas will be a broadening and deepening of the path I am

'I'm sure being an undercover agent for the URC within the BMS will carry certain responsibilities, but I haven't found them yet! I look forward to living in Nepal, learning about a new culture and discovering new skills. I look forward to

Geoff and Christine Bland



'Being accepted by the BMS was a shock, even though we'd had a year of preparation. Our first word to each other was, "Help!"'

Alec will be serving with the United Mission to Nepal as a builder. He and Dianne were married in 1977 and have two sons aged eight and six.

Alec and Diane Street



'We know that God is in control, of our lives and will not lead us and our two young son into anything we can't cope with. We also know that we have the full support of a very loving fellowship and their prayers will go with us and strengthen us.'

They are both members of Parkstone Baptist Church where they were baptised in 1983.

Alison McLean



already following as I try to understand the way God is at work in the world. Alongside this is my relationship with Tim Lehane – already serving with the BMS within the United Mission to Nepal – which instead of quietly dying away, has become stronger. With lots of prayer, including, "God, how can this be happening?" and lots of time, we realise we want to be married and that sharing our first years together in Nepal will be a challenging and exciting start to our life together.'

understanding more about how we best serve God and particularly how our experiences overseas can best be used once we're back in this country.'

Alison will be involved in teaching and community work in Nepal.

Dianne and Alec Street will also be going to Nepal after a year of preparation at St Andrew's Hall, Selly Oak.

SUPPORT AT HOME

HOW DO you assess the level of support for world mission in our British Baptist churches? How do you value the level of that support which relates to the work of the Baptist Missionary Society? The easiest test is to count – to count the number of enquirers, the number of candidates, the money given, the quantities of magazines and prayer guides sold. Would this genuinely reflect the spirit of support or the context from which it came?

Churches in Britain exist in a complex and divided society where many individuals are devalued and others are grossly over-valued. All Christians live in the multi-faith community of Britain and Baptists in particular face a multi-form church scene. Many new church members – and the numbers in our churches are increasing – come from non-Baptist backgrounds. Others belong to local ecumenical project congregations.

So it is not surprising to find a crisis of Baptist Denominational identity. Nevertheless, there is an affirmation by our Baptist churches of the role the Society has in world mission. The quantifiable support we discern is evidence of a genuine turning to the BMS as the main agency by which the local churches are able to share in the World Church and world mission.

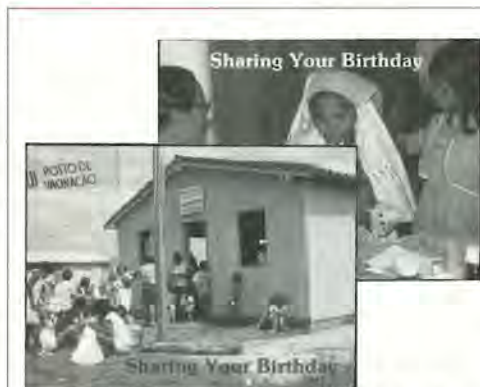
We see this in the new patterns of deputation, where many additional churches have become involved. The *Prayer Guide*, in its new format and including prayers, is increasingly being used by individuals and within the Sunday service. There is a good take-up of the material which has replaced the Gift and Self-Denial Week literature. This enables churches to set aside their own time for urging personal sacrifice for world mission. Enquiries about service and actual candidates, reported elsewhere, are other indications of growing involvement.

Changes in *Look*, our children's magazine, have resulted in increased sales and a very encouraging response from children as more and more participate in the activities. Favourable comments continue to be received about the *Herald* and a recent survey indicates that the actual readership is far wider than the circulation figure,

though even that is bigger than any other regular Baptist publication in Britain.

Sadly, though, there was a large deficit in the Society's Accounts last year. The churches did not give the increase of ten per cent we requested. Yet the giving to the General Fund was up by over five per cent, again higher than the inflation rate in Britain.

There was splendid support for different appeals, like the Women's Work and the Project on 'Healing Hands'; the Boys' Brigade Junior Appeal; the Young People's project; and giving through the Birthday Scheme. So we ought not to be dismayed, serious as the deficit is. Rather we should be encouraged to build on all the practical good will so that targets are achieved and God's work is done.



EVERY time we say, 'Happy Birthday!' we are sharing in a celebration of life itself. Isn't that so? For life is a gift, a precious one. More than that, it is fragile. Accident, disaster, and especially illness, rob so many of life before they have ever had a chance of enjoying a fair number of years. For any one of us, each birthday that arrives is cause for gratitude for the blessing of life itself.

This was the inspiration, years ago, of linking the birthday celebrations of the well and better off, with the offer of medical care for the ill and the poor. The BMS Birthday Scheme does precisely that.

In hundreds of our Baptist churches around Britain one individual is BMS Birthday Scheme Secretary. This person recruits participants who admit to having

The Area Representatives are increasingly being accepted and their role is developing. Each one has now had some first-hand overseas experience of BMS work and can use that knowledge to encourage churches to be involved more in the Society's mission partnership.

Regrettably, the Rev Carey Garnon, Area Representative for Wales, was forced to take early retirement, the eventual result of a car accident. We record our deep gratitude for his outstanding service for the BMS in Wales. A successor for him is currently being sought.

Within Mission House there have been significant changes. Miss Sian Williams has been appointed Promotion and Junior Education Secretary. Sian first joined Mission House staff as Editorial Assistant having worked for the Baptist World Alliance as Secretary to the General Secretary.

Dr Carol MacNeill has now become free to accept appointment as Medical Officer, after a period when she served most admirably in *locum tenens*.

Celebrating Life!

– the BMS Birthday Scheme

a birthday each year and being glad about it – they don't have to disclose just how many birthdays they've already celebrated! When the special day comes around the scheme member is guaranteed at least one greetings card. It is sent by the Scheme Secretary and brings greetings from the whole world family of the Baptist Missionary Society.

The member then gives a present rather than receives one by making a donation to the BMS especially for medical work. This year £138,166.00 was added to BMS funds in this way.

We know of the life saving work that is done in the church hospitals supported by the BMS and some of that work is illustrated in other pages of this report. We can see the relevance of a Scheme that acknowledges how good it is to celebrate one's own life, but how good, at the same time, to give others a chance of restored lives that they can celebrate.

The Rev John Passmore has recently taken up office as Promotion and Young People's Secretary, bringing to that role ten years' missionary experience in Bangladesh.

There are continuing changes in the Society's team of support staff. We are grateful for their generous loyalty and dedication. This has been particularly true of Mr and Mrs Barrett, Wardens of South Lodge, the missionary retirement home. The cyclonic gales in October severely damaged the roof of the house, not only totally disrupting the sleep and comfort of the residents, but also causing a speedy evacuation of the premises. The Barretts have excelled in their continued care for the residents, who, throughout this difficult period, have been living in a furlough house, and other centres, whilst waiting for the damage at South Lodge to be repaired.

Both missionaries and senior members of Mission House staff value the times of refreshment and re-creation in the retreats held in February and July each year. Most recently, we have benefited from the devotional sessions led by Mr Eddy Askew, former General Secretary of the Leprosy Mission, and the Rev Frank Cook, former President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

During the year, the Financial Secretary and the General Secretary had periods of sabbatical study leave based on the Rushchlikon Theological Seminary.

After investigating the Society's current requirements, it was agreed to appoint new auditors. Already these new advisors, Messrs Edwin Smith and Company of Reading, have been able to contribute to the Society's understanding of its financial and accounting procedures.

We are also grateful for the advice and assistance, over a wide range of matters, given by various advisors to the Society, but particularly our honorary Solicitor, Mr Peter Clark. In matters of property, staffing, joint-headquarters, legacy details, etc. he is able to offer his informed and concerned assistance.

The Society is also greatly indebted to those serving as Officers and Committee Members. A major review of the committee structure has been initiated this year and preliminary findings could lead to fundamental changes in the way the Society conducts its business through committee patterns.

This is relevant as we prepare for our Bicentenary celebrations in 1992. We intend the anniversary to be one of celebration, education and inspiration, but the direction will be towards the future and not simply related to the past.

Relationships with the British Baptist unions continue to be cordial. Each one is co-operating in preparation for worthy celebrations of the Society's Bi-Centenary. In 1993, at the time of the Baptist Assembly, the normal Assembly will be foreshortened. It will be followed by a World Church Mission Forum with representatives from Scotland and Wales participating as well as those from the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

There are specific links between the Society and the Baptist Union of Great Britain. This is clearly seen as we prepare together for Baptist Assemblies, in the Society's involvement in the launch of 'Action in Mission' and, especially, in the search for joint-headquarters. It seems likely that the site of Vernon Baptist Chapel, King's Cross, will be acceptable to the Church, the Union and the Society, for a development which will meet the needs of the three separate entities. If so, we shall see the fruition of the

hopes of generations of Baptists within England.

The ladies' choir from the Lisala Baptist Church, Kinshasa, strengthened links with the overseas churches. Their lively and committed singing, and also their personal testimony and dramatic presentation of scripture, inspired the many thousands in Britain who shared in the services they led.

International relationships were developed further by the visit of Dr Noel Vose, President of the Baptist World Alliance. He participated in some of the Society's meetings as well as in the Baptist Assembly in Bradford.

Contacts between the Society and other members of the Conference of International Mission Secretaries of the Baptist World Community have increased our understanding of the current mission task. The BWA has established a Baptist Fund for World Evangelization and Discipleship to encourage those unions and conventions which are rich in spiritual resources, but are materially poor or financially limited. The BMS was the first world body to make a contribution, but already there are many applications for support for local efforts from Africa, Asia and elsewhere.

Some promotion material



continued from page 31

The inter-change with the World Church continues through ministerial sabbatical visits and by the establishment of visits by the presidents of the British Baptist unions. The Rev Margaret Jarman has recently spent time in India and Bangladesh and the Rev Dr Colin Marchant, incoming President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, hopes to visit Brazil. Presidents of the other unions will be sharing in similar visits in the future.

British Baptists were enriched by the World Conference of Baptist Men in Cardiff. As well as meeting with a fellowship of men from around the world, some delegates visited our Baptist churches and brought their own insights and understandings to the local situation. The Society provided scholarship money to bring some delegates from our partner countries. This year, scholarship provision will provide places for 25 younger representatives of our overseas partners at the Baptist Youth World Conference in Glasgow.

The BMS has a partnership with allied groups like the Baptist Men's Movement and, particularly, the Operation Agri Committee. This support group for BMS agricultural and development work has been examining, with the Society, the breadth of its support and the continuing need for co-operation. This has led to a reaffirmation of its commitment to the task and to an understanding of how, in the contemporary scene, development must be understood in the broad sense.

The Missionaries' Literature Association, also part of BMM, is a great encouragement to our missionaries as it sends out the magazines and journals they request. It is sad that this work does not receive greater support.

Relationships within the Conference for World Mission are being re-examined in the light of the 'Not Strangers but Pilgrims' process that has affected churches within Britain. CFWM has contributed to the discussion and is waiting to see what new pattern of ecumenical engagement might emerge. It seems clear that there will be a continuing role for a world mission forum which can bring together those engaged in the tasks overseas in conjunction with the churches in Britain.

In the support at home for the overseas tasks, we see the handiwork of God and gladly express gratitude for what too easily may be taken for granted and apparently be unnoticed.

JIM'LL FIX IT

NO, not Jimmy Saville this time, but Jim Clarke, former Brazil missionary and now Area Representative for the Central and Eastern Areas. In an entertaining and enterprising fashion, this 'BMS Jim' did 'fix it' for one of the churches. An evening to involve the whole church family was his intention.

The pattern was to ask each group within the church to request some specific experience, insight, or information about World Mission work. And they did! The Mums and Toddlers Group, the GB, the Birthday Scheme supporters, the BB, the Women's Group, those concerned with outreach — a dozen or so formidable requests came from all of the organizations.

'How will the BMS be involved in evangelism in France?' he was asked. Jim fixed it with the help of material from 'The French Connexion'.

'How do missionary mothers manage to feed their children?' the Mums and Toddlers group asked. The answer was by a slide sequence with commentary that went down

well (forgive the pun), even though it included shots of such things as juicy caterpillars!

'How does the Girls' Brigade in India carry out its activities?' the GB company wanted to know. So Jim took them in imaginary involvement to Balangir, to the work of Carole Whitmee, BMS missionary with the first Indian Girls' Brigade Company. Another fix.

'What about education for missionaries' children overseas?' prompted the showing of the BMS video based on the children's hostel in São Paulo, Brazil.

At the end of the evening not one request was left unfixed and, apart from a thoroughly enjoyable time, the crowd of participants went home with more food for thought and prayer than they had thought possible.

All in a day's work for an Area Representative, of course.

Children from São Paulo Hostel on an outing



NEW STAMPS FOR OLD

EACH week, millions of letters are delivered in Britain, popping through letter-boxes of private homes and filling the mail bags of large companies. For the majority of recipients, the only valuable part of the mail item is the contents – the letter, the bill, the card. The opened envelopes are dumped as useless. Only a few use them again for correspondence, with a few more glad of their scrap paper value.

'What a waste,' cry some, for there is the worth of the postage stamp. Even in its franked and used state it is a saleable commodity in a continuing market at home and overseas.

The BMS Stamp Bureau recognizes this and acts as a centre for an important recycling activity – new stamps for old. Thousands of stamps are collected by supporters of the Society and sent in

parcels to the Stamp Bureau. Whole stamp collections are sometimes donated or bequeathed.

A massive task of sorting and cataloguing, supervised by the Rev Roy Cave of Cambridge, eventually enables the sales to be made. Valuable stamps and collections are generally sold through the retail sales department, organized by Mr R Camp, and bulk supplies of British stamps are sold to dealers.

And the 'new for old'? The proceeds of the Bureau are added to the Society's funds. They help provide for its work, including the heavy expenditure on carriage and postage. The Society is grateful that each year several thousand pounds are raised in this way. But think of those millions of stamps still being discarded! Are you helping to provide new stamps for old?



Acknowledgements

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and anonymous gifts (to 16 March 1988).

	£
Miss M Atkinson	1,652.43
Mrs D M Carre	100.00
Mrs M Davidson	2,500.00
Miss L A Halls	100.00
Mrs B L Howell	50.00
Mr H Hunter	1,000.00
Miss D M Leach	2,491.67
Miss E M Nicholas	1,000.00
Mrs G M Olney	500.00
Mr R B Shaw	2,081.90
Miss E M Silsby	300.00
Miss S D Wigmore	4,981.99
Mr J G Wright	250.00

General Work:

Anon: £5.00; FAE Aberdeen: £30.00; MT: £5.00; Anon Durham: £60.00; via Evangelical Trust: £250.00; Cymro: £120.00; Anon: £50.00.

French Connexion Project:

Anon: £11.19.

BAPTIST HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP 1988

WESTHOLME – Minehead

Family holiday centre – on seafront – near town centre and Gardens
30 comfortable bedrooms – most facing sea, several en suite
10 Single, 9 Twin, 4 Double, 7 Family, capacity 60
Two Lounges, discussion room, games room, laundry room, own car park
Excellent food and fellowship
Ideal for family and church holiday groups
We still have some vacancies for the following weeks:

28 May-4 June	Host: Rev Paul Mortimore
4-11 June	Host: Mr David Rutland
18-25 June	Host: Rev Clifford Parkin
25 June-2 July	Host: Rev Kenneth Toms
2-9 July	Host: Rev David Lewis
9-16 July	Host: Rev David Gamston
10-17 Sept	Host: Rev Charles Couldridge
17-24 Sept	Host: Rev Douglas Monkley

HOLIDAY FLATS, Minehead

– on seafront – 7 spacious flats – sleep 2-10
– fully equipped – colour TV – own car park

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

FLOODS IN RIO

'The church will be shouldering some of the burden of long-term care for some time to come,' says Eric Westwood, who is acting pastor of the Usina Baptist Church.

IT IS the afternoon, Monday 22nd of February and the sun is shining. Rio de Janeiro, the sunshine city, was never so pleased to see the sun peep through the clouds as it is today. The last few days have been a nightmare as torrential rains have flooded vast areas of the city, bringing chaos, destroying houses and claiming a number of lives.

For about three weeks the State of Rio has been covered by a vast area of low pressure, and many towns have been flooded.

The greatest disasters occurred in Petropolis, the city honoured as a summer refuge by the Portuguese royalty as it sits in the mountains some 40 miles out of sweltering Rio. However, uncontrolled housing development, as builders tore away the natural vegetation on the hillsides to climb higher and higher, left the town open to reap avalanches of falling earth, stone and property as the heavy rains washed down. Almost 200 people died in Petropolis in ten days of disaster and it is calculated that almost 50 per cent of the town will need rebuilding.

After a brief respite, the rains moved in again, this time hitting the city of Rio. Many will have seen the television pictures of vehicles floating in the streets as the flood waters, cascading down the hills which make Rio such an enchanting city, found their normal channels insufficient to cope with the quantity of water, silt and filth flowing down.

The Usina Baptist Church is a small fellowship, composed principally of people who live on the *favela* of Borel. This *favela*, like most *favelas* in Rio, sprawls its way up the hillside, many of the houses perched on the side of the bare rock face. It is really a 'rabbit warren' of small residences, and little alley ways, with endless steps leading in every direction, zig-zagging their way upwards.

The Church building is situated safely at the bottom of the hillside, by the side of the main road, but the members live at various levels, some of them in 'houses' smaller and more fragile than most British garages! The higher up you go, the more precarious it becomes.

During Saturday the 20th, several of these houses slid downwards with the crumbling earth and 3 people died. Yesterday, as the rain continued falling, members of the city's defence services were encouraging hundreds to leave their homes, as other falls of rock were imminent. We accompanied the work, helping especially those known to us to bring their young families down to safety, some of them being housed in the church. Army trucks were available to take many families to the Maracana indoor stadium.

Words cannot describe the scene. At the top of the favela, people leaving their homes in tears, fearing the loss of everything – others refusing to leave for fear of never returning to the little they own. At the foot, organised chaos with hundreds of people, army trucks, buses, TV crews and equipment, a monstrous bulldozer roaring up and down the road, trying to clear the accumulating earth in order to let the water flow. And all the time the incessant rain and the rivers of muddy water to be waded through at every turn.



Congregation leaving Usina Church, Rio

However, the long term future has yet to be faced. Where will the homeless go? Return to where they should never have been in the first place – perched on the mountain sides? Successive governments stand condemned by the fact that they have never provided a legitimate and adequate solution to the housing of the poor. The hillsides have been devastated and the present tragedies are but the harvest.

It looks as if Rio will also have a 'refugee' problem for quite sometime ahead. After the emotional wave of solidarity passes, will



Mrs Jean Westwood with Women's Group, Usina Church

Once again, it is great to see human solidarity in the hours of crisis. Every possible haven: schools, churches and other homes were opened to receive and help. Clothing, food, bedding and even nappies continued flowing in from various parts of Brazil and overseas. The immediate need is being met.

come the long term care and support of these families, many of whom have lost everything.

The Usina Baptist Church, together with others scattered around this great but sorely tried city will be shouldering a little part of this load, in the hope that in its fragile way, what we have learned of the Spirit of Christ may be shared with others.

PRAYER CALL

◆ 1-7 May

HEALTH WORK IN ZAIRE

The training of nurses is an important and exciting aspect of medical work in Zaire. Courses are either for four or two years with options in midwifery, hospital or community health. As Zairian staff assume more and more responsibility for the nursing schools so economic problems emerge. In order to attract poorer, rural students, school fees have been low. With no other source of income this poses problems in paying teachers' salaries, contributions to the state and paying for teaching materials.

Once trained, some of the nurses work within the health zone and in church health centres, assuming great responsibility yet often working in isolated villages where supervision is not easy. They need the support, concern and prayer of the local church, and also of the wider church family.

◆ 15-21 May

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN INDIA

Besides the West Utkal Agricultural centre, the Rev Reuben Senapati directs outreach schemes from Diptipur which include a village weaving project, adult literacy classes and a reading room. A new development centre has been opened at Rampur among the Kui people.

In Mizoram, Dr Lal Lawma and his wife Sangi care for orphan children in the Home at Serkawn. They are helped by nurses and the Young people of the Serkawn Baptist Church. We remember too the New Life Home and Orphanage near Cuttack and the Arunoday Midway Home, a Christian Home for drug addicts in Calcutta.

◆ 29 May-4 June

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

Each Area Representative has to keep in touch with over 250 churches. His responsibilities involve a great deal of travel, meeting with ministers and missionary secretaries, visiting groups and meetings, leading Sunday worship and special events. The job of an Area Representative is to help churches with programmes for education in world mission and to develop a deeper understanding and commitment to partnership with local, national and overseas Christian brothers and sisters.

◆ 8-14 May

EDUCATION IN NEPAL

Richard and Heather Cameron teach at the Gandaki Boarding School (Pokhara), which is being raised to international standards and now includes girls as well as boys. A new 80 bed girls' hostel is being built.

In the Gorkha district teachers are seconded to village schools working in formal school teaching and non-formal education among villagers. Kathmandu International Study Centre serves the United Mission to Nepal expatriate children from the age of eleven to eighteen years. Residential and learning facilities are provided, together with the UMN teachers, to help the children study through the medium of Correspondence schemes or self-study material from their home countries.

◆ 22-28 May

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

Thousands of students are studying in a variety of institutions. BMS is involved in this at Porto Alegre, Campo Grande, Cuiabá and Porto Velho.

In Rondônia David Brown is teaching theology by extension courses for pastors and lay people. Many students have full-time jobs in the day and study at college in the evening. Four Brazilians on BMS scholarships are studying in this country.

◆ BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE

Dr Gerhard Claas

The General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, Dr Gerhard Claas, was killed in a motoring accident on 21 March whilst on a visit to California. He was 59 years of age. The funeral took place in Volmarstein, West Germany, on 30 March. The Rev Reg Harvey attended the service together with Miss Sian Williams who served Dr Claas as his secretary before joining the BMS. The BMS joins the world Baptist family in offering thanks to God for Gerhard Claas' life. He was a great Christian statesman as well as a gifted evangelist and able administrator. We shall miss his wise and warm leadership and pray that God will be very close to his wife and family.

BREAK OUT!

BMS Summer Holidays 1988

This year, the BMS is launching out in a different direction for its Summer Holiday Programme! Take the opportunity of joining in with one of three holidays below – and grapple with world church issues!

AMONG THE ROLLING HILLS – 25-31 July

Marvellous Malvern is the venue for this year's Family Holiday. Join with 50 others for six days of relaxation and stimulation at St Edward's Conference Centre. **COST £90.00 per person.**

PHAB! – 23-30 July

Llandudno, Wales, is the location of a rewarding holiday for physically handicapped and able bodied people to share together. Many activities are planned – music, drama, sport, art and much more! If you are physically handicapped and between 15-25, or able-bodied and between 16-25, and would like to get stuck into PHAB, then write to: Geoff Evans, 41 Parklands Road, Fulwood, Preston PR2 4SJ, or phone him on 0772 863355. **COST £45.00 per person.**

MESSING ABOUT ON THE RIVER – 16-23 July

Young People! Get the taste for canal life this summer. Two brightly decorated canal boats, a ten and twelve berth, will await your arrival. Where will they take you? Who knows? The narrow boats will journey from Hertfordshire for as far as you can make it! If you are between 16 and 25, live dangerously and be a part of this exciting holiday. **COST £65.00 per person.**

NEW LIFE IN THE NEW FOREST – 13-20 August

The fabulous facilities of Avon Tyrrell are waiting for you in 1988!! Avon Tyrrell is an old country mansion standing in 43 acres of its own land, and bordering onto the New Forest. Here you can swim, sail, play tennis, badminton, rounders or do a host of other things. While you're here, John Rackley will lead you through an assault course on world mission today! **COST £100.00 per person.**

*** ALL PRICES ARE INCLUSIVE OF VAT ***

NEEDED OVERSEAS

ZAIRE – Science and Maths teachers – Electrician (short term)

NEPAL – Primary school teacher

BANGLADESH – Pastoral couple for evangelistic work

Please write to: The Personnel Secretary, BMS, 93 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4AA