

# HERALD

THE  
COMMUNITY  
OF SANTA  
MARTA, EL  
SALVADOR

## CO-OPERATING IN MISSION

NEPAL  
SURGICAL  
WARD

NEWS

COMMUNITY  
LIFE IN  
FRANCE

ALBANIA  
LETTERS



PLUS DOUBLE TAKE PULL OUT SECTION



# C O N T E N T S



Cover illustration by Sarah Prentice

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A maize field - development project in El Salvador.

## QUE VIVA SANTA MARTA!

by David Mitchell, one of the 28:19 Youth Action team now working in El Salvador.

*'Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.'* James 2:18

**T**HERE IS SOMETHING symbolic about the laborious climb from the repatriated community of Santa Marta in the northern El Salvadoran province of Cabañas, to the nearest town of any notable size, Villa Victoria. The history of the canton of Santa Marta over the last decade and more, has been one of the virtual destruction and resurrection of a community.

Villa Victoria is no sunlit plateau, but it has a church, a chemist, general stores, an occasional fun fair and most important of all a bus service to the regional capital of Sensuntepeque. Here, the inhabitants of Santa Marta can buy or sell agricultural products, receive vocational training or catch further buses to the nation's capital San Salvador. In short, Victoria is a vital link to the outside world itself.

This is a beautiful part of a very beautiful country. Victoria is a picture of a town. The square houses with red-tiled roofs, the attractive colonial style church, and cobbled streets with the sombrero wearing man on horseback, are the essence of Latin America.

The three mile walk from Santa Marta to Victoria on a

**C**o-operation is all right, in theory, when we think about it, when we talk about it in discussion groups, when we theologise and preach about the Church being the body of Christ.

Co-operation is all right, when we have the vision, when we have the ideas, when we devise the scheme, when others see it our way and are prepared to co-operate with us.

But what if national Christians see priorities differently and tell missionary agencies that they should be given responsibility, that they should be decision makers?

## HERALD

"Partnership implies that we, one of the partners, have something to contribute, have ideas, have personality, have aspirations and dreams, as well as potential and capability to analyse and to decide," writes Thomas Tellez elsewhere in this magazine.

When we talk about co-operation we recognise that we haven't all the answers. We may be convinced of the missionary imperative. We may have 200 years of experience. We may have a wealth of financial and people resources. But we remain a Society representing a very Western, First World Church. To do mission rightly and effectively today, we must listen to those who know the country, the people, the culture, the needs of the local situation and who have experience of being the Church where they are.

It is for this reason that representatives of the BMS and its partner churches overseas met last October for a Partnership Consultation. The result was that: "We affirm that all believers share in a rich Christian heritage of God-given and varied resources so we approach each other with mutual respect. We offer to each other, in trust and love, mutually and multi-laterally, and with sensitivity to one another's cultural background, those gifts which God has granted to us for the tasks of mission."



crisp, clear morning (all mornings at this time of the year are crisp and clear) although steep, is a sheer joy. As the dirt road climbs through green forests and "maizales" (maize fields), the view to the distant south takes in the noble form of the Volcano of San Vicente, in the heart of El Salvador. To the north, the high sierras of Honduras, tinted gold by the early morning sun, beckon across the sea of silent mist that fills the Rio Lempa valley. One can easily see how the early European colonisers of this land thought they had discovered a paradise. But the grandeur of the scene belies the torture that this land and its people have endured.

That same River Lempa was the scene of one of many tragic massacres that characterized El Salvador's bloody twelve year civil war, whose conclusion was only reached at Chaltepéc, Mexico in the UN backed peace accords in January this year.

The story of Santa Marta's present predicament began on 18 March 1981 when 10,000 civilians fled this region to escape the Salvadoran army's "scorched earth" policy. In a climate dominated by Cold War politics the US trained army sought to destroy the potential breeding ground of the fledgling guerrilla movement, the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front) by raising villages in the remote border areas and by killing their inhabitants. Over 100 men, women and children died on that March night attempting to cross



UNHCR



## A C T I O N T E A M

the river into Honduras, either from drowning or from being shot at from military helicopters. Everyone in Santa Marta today, old enough to remember, has their own chilling account of that gruesome event.

Unwelcomed by the Honduran authorities, the survivors eventually attained refugee status and spent the following years cooped up on the barren wasteland of Mesa Goande, which the UN called a refugee camp. Unable to farm adequately, surrounded by a ring of

Honduran military and with the knowledge that the Salvadoran armed forces had destroyed their property at home, the UN pressurised the refugees to ask for Honduran citizenship, go to a third country or return to the uncertainty of their motherland. In spite of Santa Marta being in the heart of the combat zone and despite lack of government protection, the inhabitants of Mesa Goande overwhelmingly chose to return to El Salvador.

Between 1987 and March of this year the people came back to

So for two young volunteers on a BMS "Action Team", six weeks of living in Santa Marta was always going to present new and challenging experiences

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# SANTA MARTA QUE V





*"Houses are basic - mud walls and laminated roofs..."*

*Action team member, David Mitchell*



attitude left by war means that twelve year old boys are smokers and most girls are left single and pregnant by 16. However inspite of the considerable economic assistance, the community received from bodies like the European Community and the social support from local groups like the Committee for Repopulations of Cabañas, the people here can in no way be considered spoiled. There is nothing easy or comfortable about life here.

As Andrew and I have experienced, living conditions are very basic. Houses consist of mud brick walls and laminated roofs. Hens,

ducks, pigs and even goats wander freely in and out. The dirt floors mean most people suffer from "niguas", unpleasant little black worms that enter the body through the soles of feet. Diet is simple to say the least. Beans and maize tortillas are served up for breakfast, dinner and supper. Meat, milk and fruit (other than bananas) are an occasional luxury. The swollen stomachs and pale features of the poorly dressed "monkey" (children) betray signs of malnutrition.

Work on the individual plots can be desperately hard as Andrew and I can bear witness to. My first whole day here spent in

repopulate their former village. But even as late as 1991, violent combats still raged in the hills surrounding the canton of approximately 3,000 people.

So for two young volunteers on a BMS "Action Team", six weeks of living in Santa Marta was always going to present new and challenging experiences. The problems that the community now faces are different to those of the previous decade, when all they wanted was recognition of their plight and the right to be left in peace. Recognition and rights

have come, but the toll of war is having to be faced up to in the 1990s.

Physically, many people remain maimed or traumatised. Almost everyone has lost a close friend or relative in the war. A decade of being dependent on refugee "hand outs" has altered the pattern of working life and of traditional social structures. Because so many men died or were absent fighting in the war, young men have been forced to assume the role of adults at a much younger age. This, plus the hedonistic "live for today"

# VIVA SANTA!





the field gathering piles of cut beans from the steep hillside, beating them violently to release the beans from their pods, before carrying the sacks on our backs



the two miles home under the unforgiving midday sun. The image of Latins as Sombrero clad idlers asleep under a cactus has no place here. These people may be poor, but it has nothing to do

an organised form, happy to be playing a part in their own future for a change. Twice a week people from the community travel to Sensuntepeque for training in administration, carpentry, tailoring, construction and mechanics. An enthusiastic team of educationalist and "popular teachers" recruited from the community offer children and adults an education that many missed during the war.

Maria Delia Garai a member of a San Salvadoran Baptist church travels frequently between her duties in the community and those in the capital. "Women for Dignity and Life" a women's

house where the boy lay surrounded by candles, flowers and those paying their respects. On the way up to the house, instead of dwelling on his own loss (his other two sons had both died in the war) he chose to heap praises on Andrew and myself saying what an honour and pleasure it was for the community to have two such kind foreigners like us living in the midst of "us poor folk". Gratitude has also been shown in the enthusiastic response to the English lessons we've begun in the school (and we hope will be continued by our four female companions in the Action Team when they come here). People here want to learn.

So far, thanks to God people are winning through. This article was written two days before 15 December and the deadline for the fulfilment of the Chaltepēc Accords. Last week, the FMLN at their camp here began the destruction of their rifles. Sean Cleary, an Australian resident of Santa Marta with the Jesuit Refugee Service said that three years ago he could never have imagined himself witnessing such a moment.

The army are also shedding men and material. Five days ago the Atlacatl Battalion, responsible for the flight of civilians to Mesa Goande eleven years ago, was demobilised.

Santa Marta, like El Salvador as a whole is changing fast. Unless the war re-erupts (which is unlikely but not impossible) in the 1990s they will be consolidating and building on the peace. For the people of Santa Marta this will mean the completion of the housing projects and brick homes to live in, continued progress in education and economic development and perhaps most of all, the winning back of its youth. Everyone is grateful for the peace and for the help from fine people from within and outside the community. But the biggest may lie ahead. Villa Victoria may not be out of reach, but its uphill all the way.



with laziness.

Women especially have a hard life. No man would dream of washing-up here. When I started to wash-up once, I was almost physically stopped from carrying on. The women, in addition to domestic work, also does more than her share in the field and on the construction site. Sexual harassment is a common menace and wife battering is a serious national problem which is only now being confronted since the war ended.

However, action is being taken to address these issues. A housing project funded by European governments began in January. All the building is being done by men, women and children from the community without exception of persons. The work (which is fitted in around days in the field) is gruelling, the only mechanical tool being a dumper truck, but all participate enthusiastically and in

**Our main aim has been to become part of the community. We live in the same houses, eat the same food and do the same work as the people.**

pressure group is also campaigning for women's rights, with the support of churches and the directive council in the community.

Our main aim has been to become part of the community. We live in the same houses, eat the same food and do the same work as the people. This work is principally in construction and agriculture. The campesinos are much quieter and more reserved than their city-dwelling compatriots but can be very friendly on entering into their trust.

A touching example of the latter occurred once when I was walking down what passes for the main street. A small, elderly man asked my opinion on the price of a coffin he was purchasing. His son had died from a heart attack, a condition induced by the war. I didn't know much about coffins but offered to help carry it to the



LIFE  
JUST  
KEEPS

# ON GOING ALONG

by Adrian Hopkins



*"People still need medical care. Pimu is still vital," - Dr Adrian Hopkins.*

*Below: People are working in spite of many difficulties.*

**A**FRICA IS in a state of political and economic upheaval. Over the last two years this has been increasing.

On a visit to Lomó, Togo I had to change planes to avoid a night curfew. There was some doubt about leaving as most of the airport staff were on strike.

We had one stop at Lagos, Nigeria where democratic presidential elections had just been postponed perhaps cancelled.

We stopped in Douala in Cameroon, where the main opposition leader was under house arrest and a curfew was in operation. There was some doubt about our landing in Bangui because demonstrations were planned that afternoon.

What about the average African? Life just keeps going along, the difficulties at times seem worse and one has to look

for ways around them, but Africans are resilient people and they cannot run away like expatriates in times of trouble. This is true for Pimu, far off the map of any politician or economist, but struggling on as best as possible.

During the past four months we have been based in Pimu. We have been involved in eye clinics travelling around the CBFZ area as well as other church areas. It is difficult to see what has changed since the missionary evacuation. Everything appears to carry on as normal. But not quite all is as before.

## WHAT IS THE SAME?

People are able to eat. They have gardens, there are still animals in the forest and fish in the River Zaire. The animals are further away and the fish are smaller but





this has been a growing problem due to a growing population and the need to send food to Kinshasa.

Buildings are the same. The rioting and looting which hit Kinshasa and other cities at the end of September 1991 did not spread to smaller towns and rural areas. Further rioting and looting that has hit several Zaire cities in the last three months, some for the second time in just over a year, has not affected the lives of the ordinary person in the village. A further evacuation of missionaries in some cities has not made much impact on the general population.

People still need medical care. Pimu hospital is vital. Children are coming in with resistant malaria, anaemia, worms, and chest infections as they always do. Men still come with their strangulated hernias and some women still need Caesarian Sections. Surgery still helps to pay the hospital staff's wages. People are still going blind with cataracts.

People are the same. How encouraging to see so many of the

**God's constant love in spite of all the political and economic upheavals ... but how do you explain that to a suffering people?**

walk in for many miles for a Communion Service and the new church is packed for these special services. The village catechists came for their end of the year retreat and annual salary payment. This amounts to about £2 for last year's work.

In the rural areas one is unaware of a crisis. The market in Lisala is busy and it still costs as much as ever to get there. Luckily we went by MAF so we did not have the tedious road and river journey to pick up our post. In the Lisala area there was the same organisation, levelling the road in some places and ignoring the others.

### WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

We don't recognise the new bank notes. On one eye trip patients paid one million zaires just to be examined. At last my true worth is recognised. I will only see millionaires in future! Everyone in Zaire is a millionaire. When we arrived this meant they had about 75p now its about 20p. Zaire is officially recognised as the number one country in the world... for

what? Inflation. Our first month back we increased salaries by 100 per cent. The second month back by only 50 per cent. The third month by another 100 per cent. This month it is an across the board payment of only about 25 per cent but we did give away about another 50 per cent in Christmas Bonuses.

Well I don't know how different the missionaries are but there is a distinct lack of them in the CBFZ

area! Apart from those that have been re-evacuated nearly all other missionaries are back. Why are BMS not coming back is the constant question asked and difficult to answer. We cannot say because of security when people know that others have returned. How do we explain relationships

between CBFZ and BMS to the ordinary person in the village?

Imported goods are fewer and many cannot afford them. Some have not come to see us because they are ashamed of the rags they are wearing. Leprosy patients would not come out of their houses because they had nothing to wear.

Some basic medicines are in short supply or are finished. How do you treat resistant malaria with only chloroquine and when, even in Kinshasa, there is no Quinine. Luckily basic eye medicines produced at Pimu are not too expensive and supported by Cristoffell Blinden mission. But the price of £2.50 for surgery including a new pair of cataract glasses was too much for some and we ended up doing some half price or for nothing. We have treated over 2,000 patients and operated on over 220!

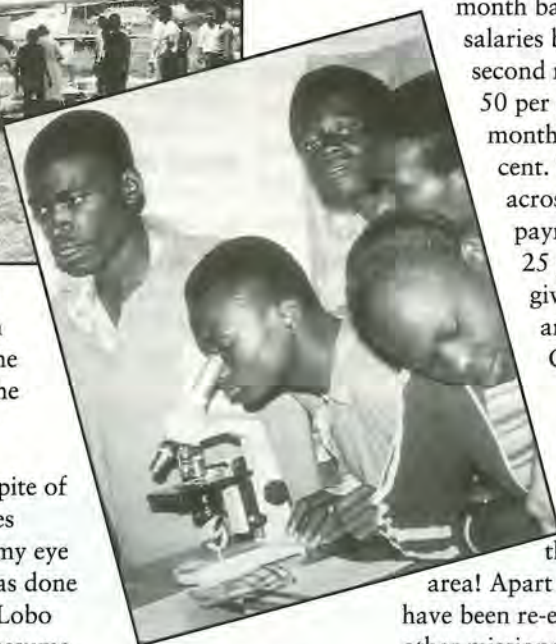
Fuel supplies are different! We have little electricity in the hospital and before every trip we have to work out how to get enough fuel to get there and back again. The sun is just as hot so we are able to use solar energy as much as possible. God's daily "electric" light continues just the same from 5.30 in the morning to almost 6.00pm every day. Just one of the things that reminds us of God's constant love in spite of all the political and economic upheavals... but how do you explain that to a suffering people?

**Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins** have worked in Zaire since 1975, most of that time at Pimu. Adrian is a doctor specialising in eye-work. Whilst based at Pimu he travelled extensively to hold eye-clinics and operate on many people suffering from cataracts.

Although they have been able to visit Pimu recently, in common with many BMS Zaire missionaries, they are unable to work there in the immediate future. So they have been seconded to work with the Cristoffel Blindenmission in the neighbouring Central African Republic.

"We are trying to start up a new project with the Central African Government to control river-blindness and to start Primary Eye Health Care. We are quite excited about it, but it has been a bit slow with the government so far."

See In View for Zaire update.



"Old faithfuls are soldiering on."

old faithfuls soldiering on whether in the hospital or the church. Our nurses are working in spite of the difficulties (apart from my eye nurse who has done a bunk). Dr Lobo who had to assume responsibility for the hospital and health zone only nine months after qualifying has been struggling on, coping with medical, financial and supply problems.

Church life continues. People





Sarah Prentice

**P**ARUSH PARUSHEV and his wife Nikolina Nedeltcheva, both in their 30s, grew up in homes where God was never mentioned. They knew little about religion. In spite of this, and the atheistic doctrine they received at school, three years ago they accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and were baptised into the Sofia Baptist Church where they are now active members.

Parush is an associate professor in the Institute of Mechanics and Bio-mechanics of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. From 1982-87, he served as Secretary of the scientists' section of the Communist Party of Bulgaria and as official representative to the faculty of the university. He is also director of a cutting-edge robotic research laboratory in Sofia.

In 1986, Nikolina won the national championship in Bulgaria for the Women's Triathlon competition, one of the most difficult of all athletic contests. She has a doctor's degree in sports medicine and teaches in that field in the University of Sofia.

A confirmed atheist, Parush never expected to become a Christian believer.

"Science and religion were opposites in my mind," he explained.

He describes his experience in Biblical terms: "It is enough to plant a seed in the hearts of people. Then the Holy Spirit does the rest."

Parush was a bright student and received a scholarship to study at the Technical University of Leningrad, Russia.

"I fell in love with the Soviet Union and with Communism," he said.

However, in Leningrad, he saw the great difference between the idea and the reality of Communism.

"I saw that even in this centre of Communism, where they taught us to be very happy, the people were actually suffering and spiritually empty."

He returned to Bulgaria in 1977 and began his personal search for truth.

"It was very difficult to find information about Christianity, or about Christian morality and

**"I reconstructed Christian teaching through the many arguments used against it.**

doctrine. Even to read the Bible was very difficult. Sometimes, I would find pieces of information through my own critical assessment of communist ideologies. I wondered why we fought against Christianity so much."

He took the only possible route to acquire religious knowledge. "I reconstructed Christian teaching through the many arguments used against it. This is a valid approach to scientific analysis."

The change came when he was a guest professor in the Netherlands from 1984-5. He scanned a book containing a chart of world religions. The chart listed Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and other world religions, "and, to my amazement, there was also a column for Marxist-Leninism."

For many weeks after his discovery, Parush could not sleep. Until that moment, he had always dismissed religion. Suddenly his analytical mind forced him to admit that Marxism had all the usual marks of a religion - a holy book, heroes of the faith, a hierarchical structure, even hymns.

"And I was part of the



hierarchy," he declared.

"I struggled against that idea with everything in me, but it was true."

Meanwhile, as a young woman, Nikolina openly professed atheism while secretly seeking "my God."

"When I was five years old, a close friend died. For months, I cried myself to sleep every night." She remembers the night when, in the midst of her grief, she felt a "presence" in her room. "It gave me a warm feeling inside."

She longed for the return of that presence. "As I grew older, I knew it had to be God," she said.

When she was nine, Nikolina read a book. One of the characters prayed a brief prayer. It was the first time she had ever read or heard a prayer. She began to repeat that prayer herself. "Guide me and let your hand be upon me. I want to walk in your ways and be a Godly person."

When Parush returned from Holland, he and Nikolina were married. They soon talked about their spiritual search and actively began to look for "true religion".

Their search took them to non-Christian religions as well as to Christian denominations.

"We tried them all, but I never felt 'my God' in any of them," said Nikolina.

"They were all too dogmatic, too hierarchical and too obscure for my scientific mind," declared Parush.

One of Nikolina's university colleagues suggested they might like to attend Sofia Baptist Church.

"I had never heard of a Baptist Church and had no idea what its identity was," said Parush. "But in September 1989 we went along. I

felt myself so comfortable because of the worship."

They immediately felt they had found the One they were searching for. They were converted and baptised. Today they radiate the Christian faith they once disdained.

They are taking advantage of every opportunity to learn more about Jesus Christ and to grow in the Christian faith.

**"I had never heard of a Baptist Church and had no idea what its identity was," said Parush. "But in September 1989 we went along. I felt myself so comfortable because of the worship."**



*Ruined church in Bulgaria*

## MACEDONIAN CALL FROM BULGARIA

The BMS is looking for a pastor to work in Bulgaria as soon as possible. In a letter to the BMS, Bozhidar Igoff, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria (BUB), writes: "We are praying that God will call people in your country who will respond as Paul did to go and help in Macedonia. We are not far from Macedonia neither spiritually nor geographically."

With the growing awareness of mission opportunities in Europe and the new freedom of recent years, the BMS and the British Baptist unions identified Bulgaria some time ago as a possible area of co-operation.

At the time when communism was overturned the Bulgarian Union was very small with only 20 churches and about 700 members. It has tripled in size since the beginning of 1991. Services are full and the Baptist Union is endeavouring to establish Christian witness in new areas of Bulgaria.

Already there are links between the Southern Association and BUB and many churches were involved in a food parcel programme through Baptist Response Europe. The BMS also made a grant of £10,000 from the Relief Fund to pay for a shipment of insulin to Bulgaria.

Last November, the Joint Consultative Committee of BMS and the British Baptist unions asked the BMS to find out whether the Bulgarians would like British personnel to work with them. The BUB responded positively and warmly to the enquiry.

"Our need is for experienced pastors because some of our major churches are without pastors," replied Bozhidar Igoff.

"The needs are immediate and we will be looking for a commitment to work in Bulgaria for at least five years."

As a new work it will be supported, initially, by the BMS BiCentenary Fund for the Future.



**DOUBLE TAKE**  
**TAKING A SECOND**  
**LOOK AT SOME OF**  
**THIS MONTH'S**  
**ARTICLES**

**CO-OPERATION WORKING TOGETHER**

1

SANTA MARTA (pp3-6).

Is it only in times of crisis in the face of a common enemy that people can work together? Within the returned refugee community of Santa Marta, where several agencies are at work, the aim of the BMS Action Team members, together with Baptists in El Salvador, has been to "become part of the community" in order to help create community. Are we, as Christians, prepared to become part of our local communities to encourage greater co-operation and working together?

2

LIFE JUST KEEPS ON GOING ALONG (pp7-8).

"Africans can't run away like expatriates in time of trouble." Angus MacNeill (see In View) has made a brief visit to Zaire mainly to show solidarity with Christians there.

How can Baptists in Britain show effective solidarity with Zairians in the troubles which face them?

What does partnership and co-operation mean in these circumstances?

There are good reasons why BMS decided to evacuate missionaries during the troubles of 1991 and why there is now only a limited BMS presence in the country. "But how," asks Adrian Hopkins, "do we explain that to the ordinary Zairian villager?"

3

SEARCHING FOR GOD

(pp9-10). The needs and opportu-

nities in the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe are obvious. The Baptist Union of Bulgaria has asked BMS to find pastors in what they say is a Macedonian Call. Teams made up of young people from European countries will be going to work in Albania this summer (see In View).



David Stockley has been looking at development projects in that country and David Sorrill (see In View) has been examining relief projects in Croatia. Many Baptists have loaded up lorries and vans and taken aid to Romania, Albania and now the former Yugoslavia.

In our enthusiasm for this area of mission nearer to home are we in danger of forgetting the ongoing needs in Africa, Asia and Latin America?

How do we take on new and essential work and at the same time remain faithful to long term work we have initiated and are committed to elsewhere?

4

CONTINUING IN PARTNERSHIP (p16)

Western missionaries brought Christianity to Thailand along with Western education and Western medicine. "But we need to move beyond cultural traditions imported from the west to develop a Thai

**Double Take**

theology of worship."

This is the continuing dilemma of missionary work - removing cultural overlays from the essential gospel. Do we recognise this as a problem in Britain? Is the culture of our churches "foreign" to the majority of people within the wider community? How can we develop a truly late 20th century British theology of worship to replace that imported from earlier generations?

**D**DOUBLE TAKE? Double Take is a way of using the Herald to consider, more deeply, the theme which is highlighted each month. Whether used privately, within a missionary or house group, or as part of Sunday worship, the hope is that a better understanding of the issues will lead to a change in attitudes, to a commitment to prayer, to involvement in mission and to action



# Bible Study

## Romans 12: 1 - 21

**P**ARTNERSHIP AND CO-OPERATION IN THE GOSPEL may be something we think we're good at, but are we? You probably are in partnership with other Christians at all sorts of different levels, perhaps without even realising it. Try and name them. Your list may be something like this:

- 1 Other Christians from other churches in your street or immediate locality.
- 2 Other Christians in your church housegroup.
- 3 Other Christians in your church.
- 4 Other Christians in an ecumenical partnership in which your church is involved.
- 5 Other Christians you meet up with at regional assembly or celebration type meetings.
- 6 Other Christians you meet up with at national assembly or celebration type meetings.
- 7 Other Christians overseas in a town your town is twinned with.
- 8 Other Christians working overseas that you or your church has contact with / Link-Up missionaries.

Which of these, if any, are the most important expressions of partnership? Give your reasons.

How is your partnership with them expressed? Is there more you could do? Where are the areas of omission?

**vv 1-2 WORSHIP AND THE WILL OF GOD.** In a recent Baptist Times article (7 Jan 1993) Cliff Richard

gives an interview and recalls a time when he was so moved by what he had seen in the areas where Tear Fund was working that he wanted to give up his career as an entertainer and go and work among the poor and needy. The Tear Fund nurse to whom he was speaking asked him if he could give an injection. "No" was the reply. "Then you would be useless overseas," she said, "You stick to what you do best, raising money, and making people aware of the needs." Can this reasoning be reconciled to sacrificial living?

What are the advantages of developing a national theology of worship as the Thais are done (p16)? What are the disadvantages?

**vv 3-8 BODY LIFE.** Do you know what your gift is? Is it something you feel happy about sharing with others or are you a little



embarrassed or coy about it? If you don't know, how do you think you can find out? Would your church actively encourage this? Are there others that want to find out their gifts too?

Is the reason that places like Bulgaria are appealing for workers that too few people are acknowledging their gifts or pastoring? or, is God not equipping people in the first place? Or, some other reason?

**vv 9-21 OUTWORKINGS OF BODY LIFE.** Which verses from this passage could you give as a "Thought for the year" to the Christians from a) El Salvador, b) Thailand, and c) Zaire? Give reasons for your choices. Are these the same verses you would choose to give yourself? Or not? What does this show, if anything?

**v 9 LET LOVE BE GENUINE.** Can you reconcile the freedom from western Christianity that has come to the Christians of Thailand (p16) with the attitude shown in El Salvador towards women? (p3) Do you think the female members of the Action Team will be stopped from doing the washing up?

**v 11 NEVER FLAG IN ZEAL.** (See Thailand article) Is it better that Christians should have evangelised Thailand in an insensitive way, than not evangelising Thailand at all?

**v 13 TELLS US TO "CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEEDS OF THE SAINTS" AND TO "PRACTISE HOSPITALITY".** Can you think of ways you can do this on a worldwide scale? Are there people or organisations you could lobby in the way David Martin did about the Bhutan refugee problem (p22)? Are there people nearer home we could help in a tangible way?





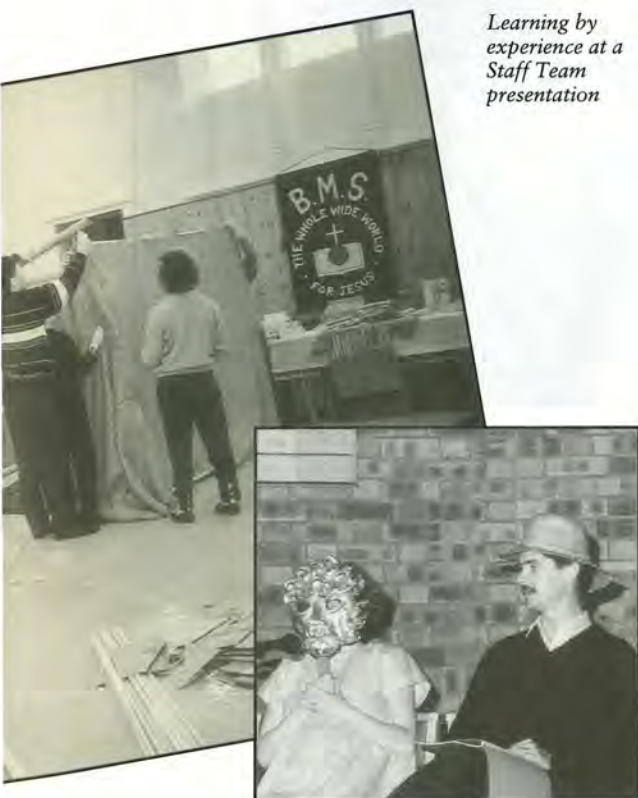
## BMS MEANS CO-OPERATION

**T**HE BMS was born out of the desire of a group of people and churches to work together to tell the world the good news of Jesus Christ. That has never changed. Today the Baptist Missionary Society exists to help Baptist churches in Britain to come together in world mission activity.

Through the BMS, local Baptist churches are working in partnership with Christians in 20 or more countries. Through these links there is an even wider networking. For instance, in the United Mission to Nepal 29 different mission agencies from many different countries are working together. In Brazil, BMS missionary David Brown is the "candidate" secretary for the Brazilian Baptist World Mission Board, linking us with another 133 missionaries in 26 different countries.

How can Baptist churches in Britain feel more part of this networking? The BMS World Mission Link programme has been designed with just this in mind.

*Learning by experience at a Staff Team presentation*



## ACTION POINTS

### 1 WORLD MISSION

Is your church involved in World Mission Link? Are you using BMS materials regularly to inform people about world mission? If not, write for a Resource Catalogue so you can find out what is available?

Is your church part of a Link Up group? Are you linked with a BMS missionary? If not, write to Audrey Rowland at BMS for more information about the scheme.

### 2 LINK MISSIONARY

Do you know who your link missionaries are? What do you know about them? What is their situation like? What kind of community is it? Who are the Christian leaders they are co-operating with?

Read their latest letters. Are there ways in which you can feel more part of what they are doing? Learn about the people, their culture, their language and the needs and work of the church. In this way, make your prayers more intelligent.

### 3 LINK-UP GROUP

Start thinking now about how the churches in your Link Up group can make best use of your Link Up missionaries when they next visit you. Plan together. But don't wait for a missionary visit before arranging group activities. Write to BMS for the booklet *Mission Education - What can we do?* Contact your area or national representative who has a fund of ideas and a list of possible speakers to help you plan a good programme of mission education - for young and old.

### 4 WORLD WIDE

Each month, BMS produces a cassette tape of short interviews with missionaries or Christians

from overseas together with the latest news. It is designed to be used either whole, or in part, in a variety of ways. Extracts can be played in Sunday worship as an introduction to intercessory prayer. The interviews can be used as discussion starters in house groups. Or it can be played in total at a prayer meeting. It is another way of bringing an overseas voice and message into the heart of your church's life. Write to BMS today to order your copy

### 5 STAFF TEAMS

Make up a party to go to your nearest Room for Change Staff Team presentation.

# Double Take



# Worship

## RESOURCES

### KINGDOM COME!

- a resource manual for world mission.

*Published by the Baptist Missionary Society, price £5 including p&p.*

This manual explains what world mission is all about and sets out the foundations for mission education. It shows how to make a mission education programme work and gives some ideas for mission events.

Included in the manual are a series of Bible studies looking at the life and work of Jesus. The cassette, which is included provides introductions for each study - especially useful for small groups.

Then follows a guide to involvement in world mission through the BMS, resources for prayer and worship, and drama and role plays.

Available from the BMS at Didcot.

## NOW READY!

### PRAYING WITH MISSIONARIES

- a wall poster with map and photographs of our serving BMS missionaries. Free from BMS, Didcot.

### TIME SHARE

- No, not an offer to rent a week in a São Paulo favela, or a fortnight on a Jamaican beach. Time Share is a commitment to take time to pray and to give. Send for the Time Share folder which includes 12 monthly envelopes to help you give to mission on a regular basis.



## PRAYERS

Go before us, Lord,  
in all our thinking,  
In all our praying,  
In all our doing,  
That through the loving witness of  
your Church  
Your Kingdom may come  
And the whole world own your  
Name. Amen.

Heavenly Father, we give thanks  
for the living, loving Spirit,  
releasing us from old fears and  
prompting us to new ventures. Fit  
us by your grace to realise more  
ardently the fellowship which is  
ours in Christ, and to extend it  
generously across all frontiers,  
through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Holy Spirit, join with us in our  
learning about the people and  
Church of ..... meet with us in our  
prayer and inspire it with your  
power; strengthen our fellowship  
with Christian brothers and sisters  
in..... and unite us in the life you  
bring, for the sake of your Son.  
Amen.

*from the resource manual  
Kingdom Come.*

## A POEM- PRAYER FOR ZAIRE

I hear the cries,  
countless souls unfold  
who die without a name  
their twisted bodies, already cold;  
the earth its dead proclaim.

Where are you, Father,  
why silence keep?  
Don't you hear their cries?  
... but now silently I see you weep  
as on the cross he dies.

Come resurrected Christ of life;  
break from the earth again.  
Arise from Zaire's burning strife  
and free them from their pain.

*Richard Hoskins, February 1992*

*The most high God does not live in  
houses... Acts 7.48*

Not in buildings,  
not in houses built of brick  
but in people,  
in the hearts of those



who live for God  
and worship him,  
the living, growing body of Christ,  
people  
from all nations  
from all tribes and languages  
working together  
witnessing to God's good news.

Lord, take this vision  
and by your Spirit  
so build your Church.

*David Pountain*





# LIFE IN COMMUNITY

**BMS 28:19 Youth Action  
team working in Lille in  
the north of France is  
getting used to living in a  
community.**

**W**E USED TO think that breakfast at 7.30 am was early enough until we arrived in Lille and discovered that breakfast is at 6.45 am. That's been the biggest shock to the system - besides the language.

Every day we eat together, pray together and do dishes together, and with all this sharing it's inevitable that we get colds and sore throats together too.

The whole routine is very structured and there's a great emphasis on creating a welcoming and homely atmosphere. This is because each community-house welcomes homeless people who need to become part of a "family" again, and also because the "family" here need somewhere they can call home too.

We usually spend three mornings/afternoons a week working at home, and between us we've been known to cook meals for 15, do basketfuls of ironing, paint doors, put up shelves, peel mounds of potatoes and do wall-papering.

ABEJ is where a lot of the community's work takes place. It is a sort of day centre where people who live on the streets can

come in and find a number of facilities available to them, such as a social worker, a doctor, a hairdresser, showers, a non-alcoholic bar.

There is also a service which gives people advice and help on how to get identity papers - essential in France in order to get a job and visas. This service is very important because ABEJ comes into contact with a lot of political and foreign refugees who are often here illegally.

ABEJ provides an address for people who live on the streets so that they can receive mail and the RMI (state benefit). During the winter months it will open its doors on Saturday and Sunday morning as well as the normal Monday to Friday, 9.30 am to 5.00 pm.

However, the ABEJ building itself merely provides shelter from the rain - sometimes all that is required.

Each member of the team works either a morning or an afternoon per week in the bar/reception part of ABEJ. It was difficult at first, working there, not knowing anybody and not having practised the language very much, but it was always possible to retreat to manning the drinks machine. However, after five or six weeks worth of experience we are all more at ease talking with the people we know and making acquaintances with those we don't. The drinks machine has, thankfully, become far less important to us.

*Above:  
BMS 28:19 team  
in France*





in relationship to the country as a whole, one per cent, but Christian work is proportionally much larger than that.

Only 44 per cent of churches have pastors. The CCT is working hard to train leaders but this takes time. We have asked help from our partner churches to find people to fill some of these positions.

We want to work in partnership with our sister churches. We envisage doing this through sharing resources and people, exchanging information in areas like Christian education,

developing AIDS crisis. We need to move beyond cultural traditions imported from the West to develop a Thai theology of worship in which traditional music and worship styles are used. We want a theological approach reflecting indigenous traditions and culture.

We also want to co-operate with many non-governmental organisations and churches to provide personnel, material resources and financial support in the area of human rights and refugee issues. The CCT is affected by the rapid change taking place in society. So we are working to build up individual congregations both for their own sakes and to develop the CCT as a strong and unified body of Christ where each member is significant. This will help us serve more effectively in witnessing to the love of God, sharing in God's compassion for all Creation.

This means sharing in a love that does not divide races, groups, traditions or cultures. Mission work that expresses this love is done co-operatively, with great sensitivity to the needs and intentions of the indigenous church.

## CONTINUING IN PARTNERSHIP

by Dr Sint Kimhachandra, General Secretary of the Church of Christ in Thailand.

**T**HE CHURCH of Christ in Thailand (CCT) is a union of mainline, Protestant denominations founded in 1934. In the beginning the CCT had 9,000 members in seven districts. Today, it has 61,900 members in 18 districts, served by 114 ordained ministers.

Thailand, traditionally an agricultural country, is very different from what it was even 30 years ago. Missionaries brought Christianity to an unchanged society, western education to an uneducated people and western medicine to people relying on superstition and local herbs. Today there is an organised Thai Church with Thai leadership. There are Christian educational institutions up to university level with Thai administrators and medical institutions with Thai directors.

The Thai church has developed its own structures and mission personnel today work within them at the invitation and under the direction of the Thai Church.

The Thai Church is very small

theological text books and human rights issues. Current projects include two programmes to strengthen relationships with our immediate neighbour churches - Laos, Cambodia Vietnam, Burma and southern China - and a project to help us respond to the

*A cross-over of cultures in Bangkok*





# SEEING SURGICAL WARD STARS IN A NEW LIGHT

Isobel Strang looks at the importance of team-work at Patan Hospital, Nepal.

**N**on stop busy-ness; questions and more questions. Telephone calls. Life on the Surgical Ward is all go. But behind the dazzle of the surgical stars is the hard team work of the departments.

The Nursing Team is responsible for moment by moment situations, answering the questions of bed-side carers - relatives and friends. "Sister! The IV has finished." "What can I give her to eat?"

Each patient goes through Admission and is provided with permits to allow relatives to pass security. There are no ward aids to help with routine administration.

From the early morning there is busy-ness. Patients are stirred, got out of bed, made to walk, if only a few steps, and the beds made in preparation for the Doctor's Round. Relatives are sent away so that cleaning can be done.

The last thing patients want to do is move. Yet the early morning stirring means that their blood, and so their heart and lungs, start to move. This gets them going and puts them on the road to recovery.

The Physiotherapists make their presence felt. "Move up the bed a little. Now move your ankles." The concept of physical exercise for health is new, due to the hardness of life getting them to



move their ankles is a struggle! Temperatures must be taken, pulses felt, respiratory rates counted. "Take a deep breath, in through the nose out through the mouth," and if there isn't enough chest movement, then out come the sterilised tubes for them to blow through.

Sputum has to be coughed up. Checked. An essential part of the process. Wood fires, carpet factory dust, dirt roads, lack of education about smoking all reduce chest compliance. It is important to get them to clear their chests before the operation to help recovery afterwards. For recovery the correct procedure has to be performed. The medicine that the Doctor has ordered used. This involves many more of Hospital staff.

The Peon asks if he can take a patient to Ultrasound. The drugs trolley, made in the Maintenance Department, must be prepared for the regular rounds. Not only do the Nurses check the drug sheets, but the Pharmacy staff do too. Are the doses correct? Do we have this medicine?

There is the delivery from the Central Sterilising Department. "Are there enough sterile gloves? Can we get connecting tubes from the CSD? Shall I go and look on another ward for a catheter?"

The CSD provides the theatres with 100s of equipment packs for surgery every week. The Operating Room (OR) staff pack the dated packages away.

The OR staff phone for the nurses to send the patients to the OR. Nurses prepare them for surgery, shaving, washing and putting iodine over incision sites, removing jewellery and false teeth.

We only occasionally see into the sterile environment of the OR. When the patient has regained consciousness the Ward is phoned to receive the patients. The Nursing team goes into action. The patient, connected to all sorts of pipes, drains and tubes must be transferred to a freshly made, clean bed.

Cleanliness is maintained through the humblest yet most significant of jobs. The House Keeping Department provides the OR staff with clean clothes, clean sheets, fresh towels, wash bowls, sputum pots, cleaned sinks, disinfected floors.

We have had some amazing successes. One lad had a major artery cut in his leg. He required 36 units of blood (the Laboratory with its tests and Blood Store is vital to Surgical Ward life). Rushed to OR and with the blood of anyone compatible (and safe) he came to the Ward. Gradually life returned. We thought he would be brain damaged. The shock to the system and his general weakness subsided. The dressings, bed-side care, careful monitoring of the IV (intravenous fluid) and the gentle progression of exercise led to complete recovery.

When patients come with high fevers, swellings and a huge abscess, the X-RAY Department helps rule out deep, bone infection. All working together gets patients back onto their feet.



**"Measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ"**

*and yet most of us,  
Lord,  
settle for much less,  
measuring our lives  
by the standards of the world,  
going our own way,  
caring more about what people  
think  
rather than whether we are doing  
your will.*

*Lord,  
prepare us  
for our Baptist Assembly  
that it may be a time  
when we listen to your voice  
and understand the "unity  
inherent in our faith",  
the life we have together  
in Jesus Christ.*

## CALL TO PRAYER

will be addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the speaker at the Wednesday World Mission Evening will be Dr John Sundquist. Dr Brian Haymes, who will be inducted as President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, will address the Assembly on the subject 'The fulness of Christ'. The incoming BMS Chairman is the Rev Tom Bowman.

**WEEK 17**

April 25-May 1  
ZAIRE: NORTH  
EQUATOR

The North

Equator Region is a densely forested area stretching some 200 miles east to west on either side of the River Zaire. Apart from Lisala, with an estimated population of 200,000, and the plantation towns of Binga and Bosondjo, the Region is one of settled small villages. It is divided into six CBFZ Districts. See Adrian Hopkins article (page 7) for an update on the situation at Pimu, the centre of one the districts and where Pastor Bombimbo is based.

college."

Another anniversary was celebrated last October by Valerie Hamilton. It is 25 years since she first arrived in Bangladesh. Now Convenor and Co-ordinator of Sunday School work throughout Bangladesh, she asks us to pray for the various meetings and children's camps which are being planned.

**WEEK 19**

May 9-15  
BRAZIL: RIO  
GRANDE DO SUL  
AND SANTA

CATARINA These two southern states of Brazil are very different from the rest of the country. The population is more obviously European with a high percentage of Germans. This is seen in the Bavarian style architecture, particularly in Santa Catarina. It is also a more highly developed area and Santa Catarina has been targeted by the Brazilian Baptist Convention to stimulate church work. Church growth is slow and there is a need for a trained leadership with a vision for evangelism and church planting.

We reported last month on the work of Roger Collinson in Rio Grande. In the same state, at Porto Alegre, are Martin and Kathie Hewitt where Martin is teaching in the theological seminary as well as helping in local church work.

John and Maria Dyer move to a new work in Santa Catarina later this year, where Chris and Marion Collicot, based at São Bento do Sul, are involved in Association work.

Vince and Sadie MacDougall have moved to the town of Joinville. "We are working with the First Baptist Church, helping to plant an urban church. With us we are ten members and began with an evening Gospel Service on November 8.

"As our small group begins to pray and to invite their neighbours and friends to hear the gospel, we need your prayers of faith as we trust God for the increase."

**WEEK 16**

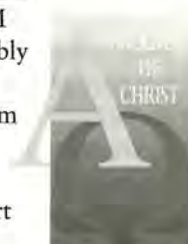
April 18-24  
BAPTIST  
ASSEMBLY AND  
WORLD

MISSION FORUM

The Baptist Assembly this year is taking place in Nottingham at the University and the Royal Concert Hall. Apart from the business

which has to be transacted each year, this year's Assembly will be the climax of the BMS

BiCentenary celebrations. On the Tuesday afternoon the World Mission Forum begins. There will be six sessions of various seminars taking place from Tuesday through Wednesday to Thursday morning. Delegates will have the opportunity to consider many different aspects of mission. The Evening Celebration on Tuesday



**WEEK 18**

May 2-8  
BANGLADESH:  
CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION

The College of Christian Theology of Bangladesh (CCTB) was established almost 25 years ago. It is an interdenominational College which offers quality ministerial training for men and women called to Christian service, and attracts students from many different churches. The Principal is the Revd Simon H Sircar.

The CCTB offers not only full time courses, but also courses by extension. On November 7, last year, there was great excitement when the first class of students to be awarded the Bachelor of Theology graduated.

Christine Preston reports: "This is the culmination of the hopes, prayers and aspirations of the pioneers who founded the

**1993  
PRAYER  
GUIDE  
UPDATE**





## BIBLES IN CHINA

May I thank Mr David Brooke (Viewpoint, January 1993) for his reply to "The growing church in China" and also for his love and concern for the believers there.

The Amity Press (a joint venture between the United Bible Societies and the China Christian Council) was created with the permission of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to print Bibles in China. One reason was so that it would not be necessary to smuggle Bibles. In order to encourage the establishment of this press, the PRC allowed all the



machinery to enter China exempt from customs duty and sales tax.

No one claims that the number of Bibles printed in China fully meets the need, but the miracle is, approximately 1.5 million copies are being printed annually, and permission has just been received for that number to be increased by 650,000. The total number of Bibles printed in China up to January 1993 is approximately seven million.

No Bibles are sold through shops, they are distributed by post, or through 24 distributions points across the country. The price is subsidised by the UBS who provide the paper free, that

the price of a pocket Bible is less than 50p.

Those who smuggle Bibles are regarded by the Chinese government as part of "the hostile foreign forces" and consequently the courier recipients in China are in danger of being arrested and imprisoned. Foreigners may retreat across borders but desirous believers face the consequences. Also the leaders of the church have to apologise to the communist authorities for the illegal activities of overseas Christians who deliberately flout Chinese law. There is a legitimate need for more Bibles, but any illegal method of supply cannot be God honouring, and can be counter productive by drawing persecution to the Chinese recipients.

Within the last six months the Amity Press, with the blessing of the China Christian Council, has entered into an agreement with East Gate Ministries International - a USA organisation who assist house churches to print 1,100,000 scriptures over the next five years especially for house church believers. The Revd Doug Sutphen, chief operations officer of the EGMI and a former smuggler, said, "The era of Bible smuggling is now past and the era of communication, co-operation and trust has begun."

This agreement named "Project Light" was announced in USA by Revd Ned Graham, son of Billy Graham. It is hoped that organisations like Open Doors will cease Bible smuggling into China but rather support the UBS in supplying the need legitimately.

Mike King, production manager at the press who previously served with YWAM, said "We could use five presses in China, the size of this one." The Bible Society in Australia has prepared an excellent twelve minute video on the Amity

Press entitled "Miracle in China" and this is available at the British and Foreign Bible Society, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon, SN5 7DG. Mr Brooke and I both visited China last year but we were in contact with two different aspects of the Christian situation. One was with the "Underground Church" with its thousands of house churches, and the other with the "Open Church" with its 9,000 and more overcrowded churches, thousands of house churches, 13 theological seminaries with 770 students in training for the ministry. It behoves us all as overseas Christians to appreciate that the church in China contains both aspects and that in the wide expanse of this great country there are not only places of persecution and difficulty, but areas of great progress, advancement and growth within the Protestant church.

Our Baptist denomination stands for "evangelism and freedom" and our Missionary Society has sown the Gospel seed in China. This seed is bearing fruit. There are many churches in the three provinces in which the BMS worked - Shaanxi, Shanxi and Shandong who are glad to look back to their BMS connections and are maintaining their witness as part of the believing fellowship in China. It is wonderful to see the fulfilment of our Lord's promise - "I will build my church." All that the church requests of Christians abroad is fellowship in prayer; support for its scriptures programme through the UBS and the Amity Press, and a spiritual understanding that they are seeking to serve the living Christ in a communist environment.

**David R Edwards**, (former BMS missionary in China and Bangladesh).  
New Zealand

## BI CENTENARY EDITION

### A HARMONISER

The Principal of the London Bible College (Peter Cotterell) wrote in the October Missionary Herald condemning other religions.

I did not appreciate his approach at all and hope I never see another article like his in the magazine. We must respect other beliefs and the people who hold them. Intolerant attitudes can only lead to disharmony. I am unashamedly a harmoniser.

**Madeleine Channer**  
Ilford Essex

### DISAPPOINTED

I have just been reading the BiCentenary edition of the Herald (October) and enjoyed it. Peter Cotterell's article is excellent. The cost of mission is challenging. Denton Lotz's story about D L Moody is good ... but why is Michael Taylor's article included when he refers to being "thoroughly ecumenical ... our roman Catholic sisters and brothers"? Does he mean that we stand shoulder to shoulder with the Roman Catholic Church in a missionary enterprise to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ? Surely this is impossible for there are two distinct gospels here.

Peter Cotterell states, "Jesus is the only way." Surely the Roman Catholic church teaches that men are made right with God by joining the church. Christianity teaches that men are made right with God by joining Christ. I was disappointed to read Michael Taylor's comments.

**John O McIlvenna**  
Carrickfergus  
Northern Ireland

VIEWPOINT



## OPPORTUNITIES OVERSEAS

### EDUCATION

#### CHINA

TEFL (English)  
Teachers for work with the Amity Foundation for July 1994.

#### INDIA

Volunteer Teacher of Western Music for Vellore, South India.

#### NEPAL

UMN - Assistant Education Secretary, Geography teacher, Primary tutorial teachers.

INF - Teacher, Head Teacher for Administrative and Support Services Project.

### ADMINISTRATION etc

#### NEPAL

UMN - Personnel Secretary, Training and Development Consultant, Treasurer.

INF - Treasurer.

#### SWITZERLAND

Business Manager, with German, for Rüschtikon Seminary.

For more information on these and other openings for service please contact Janet Claxton, Baptist Missionary Society, Didcot.

## UPDATE ON ZAIRE

At the end of January, chaos came to the Zairian capital of Kinshasa as troops went on the rampage once again. More than 100 people were reported killed and many foreigners left the country.

The troubles were sparked off by the President's attempt to introduce a new two



million zaire note, worth about £2. The Prime Minister, Tshisekedi, said they would only add to the country's inflation. When market stallholders refused to accept them from army wives the soldiers rioted.

The plane carrying BMS missionary Steve Green, who was on his way to visit Kimpese, flew over Kinshasa and landed at Brazzaville on the other side of the river instead. He eventually arrived in Kimpese, but Gwen Hunter, who had gone to the capital to meet him was stranded there for a few days and stayed with Ruth Montacute, head of the British Association School. John and Rena Mellor, at the International School of Evangelism, although not far away, were undisturbed by the troubles.

All Baptist churches in Britain were asked to pray for Zaire on February 7. Pastor Koli, President of the Baptist Community of the River

Zaire, said how very much Christians in Zaire appreciated this concern. As it happened, by that Sunday a semblance of normality had returned to the city and most people were able to get out and go to church.

BMS Overseas Secretary, Angus MacNeill flew to Zaire on February 11 mainly "to show our solidarity with Baptists in Zaire."

## ARREST OF PASTOR

Descriptions of the arrest and imprisonment of pastors makes one pause, especially when it is one's own city.

In January, the pastor of one of the growing Baptist churches in Dhaka, Bangladesh, spent some time in the central jail. He had been refused bail after being arrested on a fabricated charge.

His testimony, when visited by his wife, was to the open hearts and minds of the university professors who shared his cell.

Around the city churches, those who met to pray for this pastor faced the challenge, "Are we ready for when this happens to us?"

## MUSLIM GATHERING

The second largest gathering of Muslims in the world took place in Dhaka in January when 2.1 million people congregated for the bi-annual *Biswa Ijtema*. It took place at the time when Baghdad was again being bombed

and when a mosque in Benares was being threatened with destruction following the Ayodha incident.

## 125 YEARS OLD

Most of the 54 members of Mymensingh Baptist Church were joined by family and friends in November for a weekend celebration for their 125th anniversary.

For the last 110 years the church has been linked with the Australian Baptist Missionary Society and through them is part of the Bangladesh Baptist Fellowship. However, it was founded by BMS missionaries.

An impressive list of 27 missionaries have been involved in the work and witness of the church dating back to 1867. Before that, William Robinson made an eight day boat journey from Dhaka to the small town of Mymensingh on the bank of the mighty Brahmaputra. The 80 mile journey today takes less than three hours by local bus and Mymensingh is a thriving district town.

The church continues to be challenged by the needs of this expanding city because it has remained relatively unresponsive to the gospel whilst many new churches have been planted in the surrounding area.

The weekend of celebration was supported by local dignitaries including the mayor, the local member of parliament, church leaders from the Anglican and Roman Catholic communities as well as





many Baptists. The music was led by the youth choir from Mohakhali Baptist Church where Mark Binney of the 28:19 Action team had a considerable input last year.

The focus of the celebration was to continue looking forward to Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith and to be courageous in responding to the challenges of tomorrow.

## GRAVE DISCOVERED

The grave of Thomas Burchell, famous BMS missionary to Jamaica, has been found in Abney Park Cemetery, Stoke Newington, London. The original gravestone had been broken and so a new one has been erected by two of his great-grandchildren, David and Elizabeth Edmonds. It reads:

SACRED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
REVEREND THOMAS-  
BURCHELL  
WHO AFTER  
LABOURING IN THE  
ISLAND OF JAMAICA  
AS A BAPTIST  
MISSIONARY FOR  
TWENTY TWO YEARS  
DURING WHICH HE  
FOUNDED  
NUMEROUS  
CHRISTIAN  
CHURCH  
TOGETHER WITH DAY  
AND SUNDAY  
SCHOOLS TOOK A  
PROMINENT PART IN  
ACHIEVING THE FREEDOM OF  
THE SLAVES AND IN  
PURSUING THE HOLY ENDS  
OF HIS MINISTRY  
WAS COUNTED WORTHY TO  
SUFFER SPOILATION AND  
IMPRISONMENT DIED IN THE  
CITY 16TH MAY 1846 IN THE  
47TH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

## HELP FOR CROATIA

Former BMS missionary David Sorrill visited Croatia at the end of January at the request of the Society. The BMS was asked to send someone qualified to assess, evaluate and make proposals so that Baptist relief work there could benefit from a large sum of money donated by the Hungarian born US speculator, George Soros.

David Sorrill, based at Varazdin, north of Zagreb, has been examining two Baptist relief networks. Duhovna Stvarnost, operated by Dr Branco Lovrec, President of the Baptist Union of Croatia is a reception centre for refugees. *Moja Bliznji* (My Neighbour) distributes many different kinds of aid, most of which arrives in the country through the work of small, independent charities linked with churches throughout Europe.

In order to benefit from the Soros gift, any programmes put forward by Baptists must be within Bosnia-Herzegovina and for the benefit of Christians and Muslims alike.

## ALBANIA

Baptist Young People from all over Europe are being challenged to spend some time in Christian service in Albania this summer. The delegates to the EBF's Children's Workers and Youth Secretaries conference accepted this challenge after hearing from BMS missionary, Chris Burnett, who is co-ordinator of the Albania project sponsored



*Chris Burnett helps unload aid for Albania*

jointly by BMS and the European Baptist Federation.

Chris said that there was not much time to organise the teams but "things change very quickly and there is an urgent need to make the most of the opportunities while they are still available."

The aim is to have five teams spending four weeks in Albania in the three months from July to September. They will be engaged on two main projects. One is manual labour, sharing in agricultural work by digging drains or helping to bring in the harvest, or plumbing work replacing toilets in a school.

The second, in the capital Tirana, is to engage in street evangelism using drama and a coffee club providing facilities for a drop-in type ministry.

At the beginning of February, BMS missionary, David Stockley, went to Albania to assess the possibilities for agricultural and development work.

## CHECK OUT

### DEPARTURES

Iain and Karen Gordon to Nepal

Stephen Green to Zaire

Andrew and Jenny Wilson to Cameroon (seconded to European Baptist Mission)

### VISITS

David Martin to Nicaragua and El Salvador

Reg and Maire Harvey to Canada

John Passmore to Italy

Angus MacNeill to Zaire

### LEGACIES

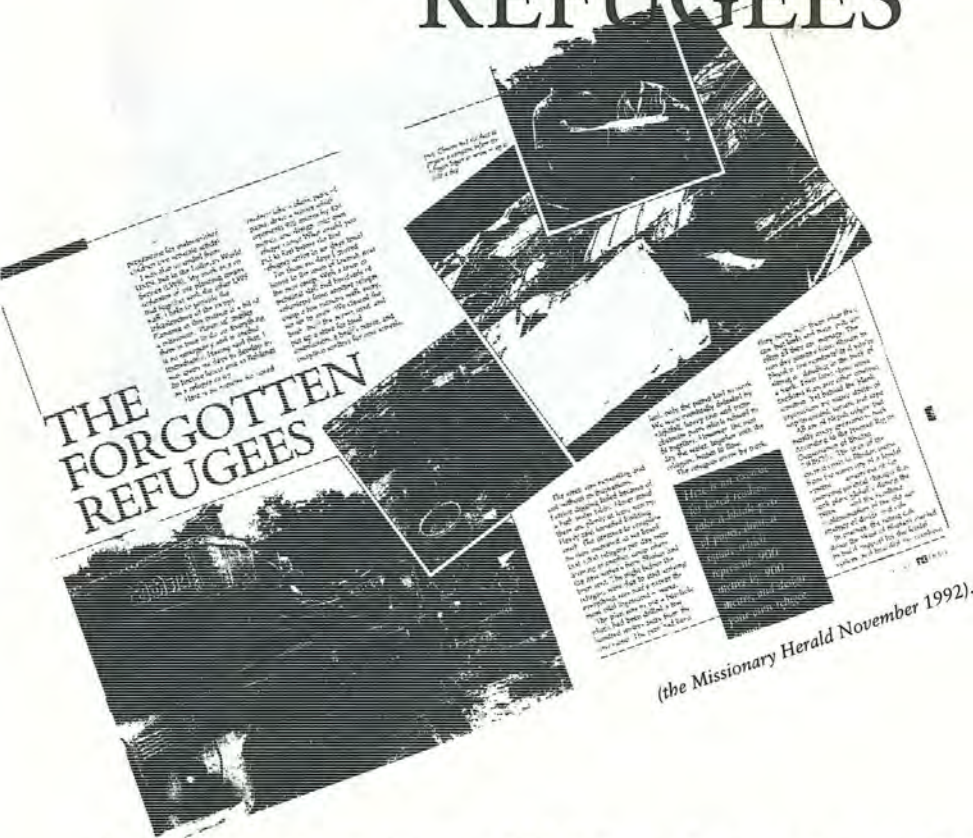
Eva Humphries	500.00
David Williams	300.00
Mrs I M Dunmore	200.00
Mrs D S Ince	2,000.00
M Abbott	500.00
Adaleina Herbert	1,000.00
Miss Eurfron Griffiths	1,502.93
Miss M Petty	4,732.52
Legacy Tax	8,709.14
Mrs Kitty Angel	5,157.03
W M Bush	20.98
Mrs Alice Louise King	50.00
Kathleen Pike	527.96
Mrs I W Barrett	750.00
Mrs Alice Lees	500.00
Mrs Eleanor Baker	47.66

### GENERAL WORK

Maidstone: £54.00; Badge Making Machine Funds: £41.00; Sale of plants at Baptist House: £10.24; Paulton: £2.50; Southend on Sea: £10.00; Durham: £40.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon: £20.00; Anon: £20.00; GAYE Voucher: £58.45.



# NEW INFLUX OF BHUTANESE REFUGEES



the King is becoming more rigid in his attitude and the renewed expulsion of ethnic Nepalis would seem to confirm this

**L**AST NOVEMBER, David Martin, BMS Assistant Overseas Secretary, wrote to Robert Jackson, the local Didcot MP, about the Bhutan refugee problem enclosing a copy of Jerry Clewett's article in the November Herald.

"We would be grateful to learn of our own Government's assessment of the situation in Bhutan which has resulted in 100,000 people being forced to leave the country. Further, we wish to know of any action being taken to call the Bhutanese Government to comply with the United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights," he wrote.

Robert Jackson passed the correspondence on to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and in January Mark Lennox-Boyd, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, responded.

"We share your constituent's concern about the refugees from

**T**HERE ARE NOW six camps and all are full, the last one, at Beldong, becoming full at the end of December. That leaves us with a problem because new land has not yet been allocated by the government of Nepal.

New arrivals are having to crowd into the existing camps, which is not good for health, because minimum space standards as laid down by the World Health Organisation cannot be met

The influx of refugees is again increasing after a lull between October and December and currently averages around 100 each day. The total now in the six camps is 75,000.

The problem is not easy for the government of Nepal. Although we press them for more land for the refugees, they are also mindful of the lack of land in Nepal and the existence of many landless Nepali people.

## Writing from Damak in south east Nepal, Jerry Clewett reports on his continuing work with refugees from Bhutan

The land given so far has been forest land, but refugees need firewood for cooking and 75,000 refugees need a lot of firewood. The local forest therefore becomes endangered. This problem should be reduced since it is the intention to distribute kerosene stoves and kerosene supplies to all refugees.

A solution to the cause of the refugee problem does not seem imminent. It was planned for the King of Bhutan to meet with the Prime Minister of Nepal at a regional conference, but that has now been postponed indefinitely due to the political problems in India. If anything, the noises coming from Bhutan indicate that

Newly arrived refugees from Bhutan in Goldhap camp









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