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Annual report 1995

May Missionary Herald

*Sing a new song to the Lord!
Sing to the Lord, all the world!
Sing to the Lord, and praise him!
Proclaim every day the good news
that he has saved us.
Proclaim his glory to the nations,
his mighty acts to all peoples.*

Let the Earth Sing

psalm 96

*The Lord is great and is to be highly
praised:
he is to be honoured more than
all the gods.
The gods of all other nations are
like idols,
but the Lord created the heavens.
Glory and majesty surround him;
power and splendour fill his temple.
Praise the Lord, all people on earth;
sing to the Lord and rejoice
in the Lord's glorious name;
bring an offering and come into
his temple.
Sing to the Lord, all the earth!
Say to all the nations,
The Lord
is king.
The earth is set firmly in place and
cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with
justice."*

*Be glad, earth and sky!
Roar, sea, and every creature
in you;
be glad, fields, and everything
in you!*

*The trees in the woods will shout
for joy
when the Lord comes to rule
the earth.
He will rule the peoples of the world
with justice and fairness.*

BAPTIST
MISSIONARY
SOCIETY

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Let the Earth Sing

May *m/z* / Annual report

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Introduction

Irrepressible praise! In Psalm 96, there is a spontaneous outburst of overflowing praise that will not be quenched. It is like the time when our Lord was entering Jerusalem and his disciples were praising God. When the Pharisees urged Jesus to rebuke His disciples, he replied, "I tell you if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." There are occasions when praise cannot be suppressed.

This is not the mood of many British people. There is a sense of doom and gloom within these islands. Many are conscious of the shortcomings of the economy and of the stress that comes from high unemployment and poverty. This is reflected in the life of many churches, some of which evidence growth, but not the majority of our Baptist churches. Not surprisingly there is a spin-off in problems

with church finances and the difficulty of ministers being unable to move from one local congregation to another with an inevitable sense of ministerial weariness.

The praise that will not be repressed is based on the realities of life in this world, especially an awareness of the greatness of God and our Lord's outworking love. As the Psalmist makes clear, this cannot be measured simply by local experiences but rather is evidenced by the vastness of God's influence.

The Psalmist urges God's servants to sing a new song because every evidence is of the freshness of what God is achieving. The scope of the Lord's influence is clear, as is the vastness and certainty of God's sovereignty. The inevitability of God's judgement and the revelation of his righteousness is affirmed. But what universal joy will then be revealed, so that the heavens and the earth and everything within them sing for joy! There will be universal celebration when all of this greatness of grace and righteousness is known throughout creation.

"Let British Baptists sing" is the message of this BMS Annual Report. There are areas of concern within the British Isles and within some aspects of our mission partnership, nevertheless we see God at work in this world. God's salvation is being proclaimed and winning a response.

God's Spirit is bringing healing and wholeness to individuals and communities. God's righteousness is being pursued and experienced. God's much loved children are being helped to fullness of life in a variety of places. The Spirit of God is opening doors for new opportunities for these tasks of the gospel.

There is a rightness of spontaneous thanksgiving for all that God is doing through the Baptist Missionary Society and our partners. Surely this helps each one of us to look afresh at our own local situation and the tasks of mission that confront us. Can we, in the context of what God is doing around the world, view our own situation with any sense of gloom or despair? Above all, as we see the varied and rich activities of God we not only share in irrepressible praise to a worthy God, but also declare our sense of inexpressible privilege in being involved in the mission of God to all the earth. May you read and rejoice! ●



*Let the
Earth
Sing*

Proclaim the good news

All the time and in every way BMS workers and partner churches are making known God's good news in Jesus Christ. People are coming to faith; new churches are being planted; and new pastors and evangelists are being equipped for future work. So, Sing to the Lord, and praise him!



*Sing a new
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A new job Margot Bafende was given another job in Zaire last year. She was asked to have oversight of a small “sous-paroisse” (daughter congregation) at Kola, in the valley about 12 km from Mbanza-Ngungu.

There are about 50 members, mainly village folk from the villages around Mbanza Ngungu, with a nice little group of deacons in charge. Church work in the valley started in a group of villages mainly centred on Nkanga Nsangi in the 1930s. This is a village about 15 km from Mbanza Ngungu, the last part over an appalling bush road which will be impossible in my little Renault-4 once the rains restart.

These villages form one of four “quartiers” or areas of the parish, and now form a challenge to the church, because much of the active population has moved out onto the main arterial Mbanza-Ngungu - Kinshasa road. The few church members left in the villages are elderly, some are housebound, and they are scattered: one, two or three in each of the seven to eight villages. This is known collectively as the Kinsende area.

We were at Nkanga Nsangi the first Sunday in August, and nearly 100 attended the open-air service, both local villagers (including our two church members there, bent, elderly ladies in their 80s or 90s), plus our own members walking there from all around. It was incidentally the first appearance of our new women’s choir, 14 of them, who were cheered lustily!

There *are* local young people in the villages; on my first visit to Nsangi I counted over 30 children of primary school age who crowded around the car to investigate the curious phenomenon of a white “nengwa” (woman missionary) there, the first, I guess, for 30-40 years? When we asked why they weren’t in school (this was June and exam time), they sheepishly said that either they weren’t in school this year, or had been excluded for non-payment of fees. Pastor Bilombo from Loma, who was with me, pointed out to them that they could very easily earn the amount needed by making and selling local brooms and brushes...

Many of these children came to our service. I discovered that they attend the Kimbanguist church in the village, attracted (so I was told) by the local Kimbanguist fife and drum band of which they are members, and who came to play for us. I



had invited them and they turned up about two thirds of the way through the service, with a great flourish, tooting, and banging. Christian witness and activity in these villages is a matter for reflection and prayer, and for future action...

The other three “quartiers” of Kola church area are based on three villages stretching along the main road over a distance of 7-10km: Kola, Mbala, and Boko. Mbala, in the middle, is a typical tribal village, but both Kola and Boko are new areas, technically called “cités”, laid out in criss-crossing parallel and perpendicular dirt roads, where each little plot of land has a little house built, or half-built, by the owner, of home made burnt bricks and usually a grass roof; some though have roofing tins. Parts of the Boko and Kola *cités* are on mains electricity, the rest use paraffin lamps. All draw their water from wells or little rivers in the valleys.

Sitting outside one of these houses, and talking or maybe drinking coffee with my new friends, it’s as if I’m 100 miles from Mbanza Ngungu, town life; it’s another world! The parish rents a little house in Kola cité, which is my office. I spend each Wednesday afternoon there, and sometimes other afternoons. There we keep the few church belongings: a table and some benches. ●

Christian witness is a matter of reflection and prayer, and for future action...

Mohamed, friend of Jesus...

Mohamed died on 16 January. "He was the first believer within the new Baptist community in Albania to die," wrote BMS worker, Glyn Jones. "I will miss him.

Mohamed was 65, a heavy smoker and a chronic asthmatic. He had been in poor health for some time but the end came suddenly after he had gone to his elderly mother's home feeling unwell. He had told us he was tired of life and ready to meet God, but we had no idea it would be so soon.

He was a small, shy man, easily overlooked in a crowd. He didn't say much and didn't have many friends. Last summer he turned up at our Baptist meeting place in the centre of Tirana saying he was lonely. He was welcomed and told he had friends here. From then on he came regularly, sitting in the same seat by the window to gather a little of the sun's warmth in our unheated meeting-room.

When we had our first communion service the servers passed him by because he was neither bap-



tised nor had he given a public profession of faith.

After the service he remonstrated with me: "Why was I forgotten?" I told him he wasn't forgotten but the elements were for those who are followers of Jesus. "Well I'm a follower," he said and when American missionary Gail Hartley followed this up with a visit, he confirmed it.

Next Sunday morning he gave public testimony to his faith. Mohamed was to have been baptised in the sea later this year when the weather became warm enough for a baptismal service.

Returning from leave after Christmas I noticed Mohamed was not in his usual place on Sunday morning. A few days later we heard he had died that same evening.

Pastor Saverio, Fredi Galoshi and I visited Mohamed's mother and sisters to offer our condolences. Immediately relatives and friends began to tell us about Mohamed's faith.

"Jesus was Mohamed's friend," they said. Mohamed had told them that "the Baptists are my relatives, my brothers and sisters."

"He urged us to trust in Jesus and read the Bible like he did," they said "and on his death bed exhorted us to 'take my place in the church'." It was a wonderful testimony to a changed life.

Mohamed came from a family with a Muslim background but had spiritually crossed over from death to life a few months before physically making the return journey. His Bible was displayed on the mantle-shelf at his mother's house for those bringing condolences to note. The sincere warmth of the welcome we received from his natural family, coupled with the unsolicited testimonies they gave to Mohamed's faith (none of his close relatives are Christians), proclaimed a degree of commitment to, and trust in, Christ which would shame many so-called Christians.

Yes, I will miss Mohamed, friend of Jesus. ●

*Jesus was
Mohamed's
friend and
Baptists were
his relatives,
his brothers
and sisters*



proclaim the good news



Time to move on From nine to 47 in the congregation; from the patio of a house to a church building; from a new missionary enterprise to self-sufficiency and all in three years.

It nearly didn't happen. When BMS workers, Tim and Rosimar Deller, returned to Agua Boa in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil last year they discovered they had "some difficult spiritual knots to untangle." They had returned from Home Assignment ready to pack their belongings and move to a new location in the state of Goias.

"But we encountered a congregation that feared the future," they reported. "Were they strong enough as a group to be without missionary help? Was the local leadership capable of being without a pastor and still maintain the group together? Was there enough money coming in through tithes to maintain a pastor and his family? Although they had a church building and a plot of land next to it, they still had no house for the pastor.

"February was spent retrieving members and friends that had gone astray. At the end of the month we accepted the invitation to work in Goiania but made it clear that we would not move before the end of May.

"March, April and May were profitably spent tackling the doubts expressed above. Backed by prayer sessions the congregation questioned whether they were giving enough of themselves - time, gifts, material and spiritual resources - to the cause of Christ.

"Time was spent in individual and collective meditation of the history that had brought them together as a gathered community and also in the projection of what could be done in the future.

"The result was startling! New gifts were discovered. Hidden talents came to the fore. They realised that they could afford to pay a pastor more than the average salary of ministers in the state. However, one problem remained, the manse.

"The manse became the object of much prayer. Ideas were exchanged: buy a manse over the next years and be without a pastor; request use of the BMS house for a period. The outcome was that the BMS decided to sell their house in Agua Boa to the Baptist State Convention of Mato Grosso, who would turn it over to the church in Agua Boa. This news was relayed to us during the last week of May.

"The congregation in Agua Boa is calling its own pastor and our task as the church planting team is complete. From nine to 47 in the congregation; from patio of the house to a temple; from being a missionary enterprise to self-sufficiency in three years. *To him all praise and honour.*" ●

Some faqs

John Dyer is engaged in a lay training programme in the Brazilian state of Santa Catarina. What does it involve? Here he answers some FAQs (frequently asked questions).

1 What is the target group?

Our courses are aimed at leaders and potential leaders of our Baptist churches, men and women from about 18 years of age upwards.

2 What subjects do you teach?

In the first two years (basic course) we have the following subjects: Evangelism, Discipleship, Preaching, Ecclesiology, Hermeneutics, Bible Doctrines and studies in Acts and I Corinthians. The third year (intermediate course) offers classes on Leadership, Christian Counselling, Church Planting, Christian Ethics, The Holy Spirit and Music.

3 How often are classes held?

Either weekly or fortnightly. Most meet on a Saturday afternoon.

4 How long do the courses run?

For two years (basic course) or three years if students decide to do the intermediate course as well.

5 Do the students receive a certificate?

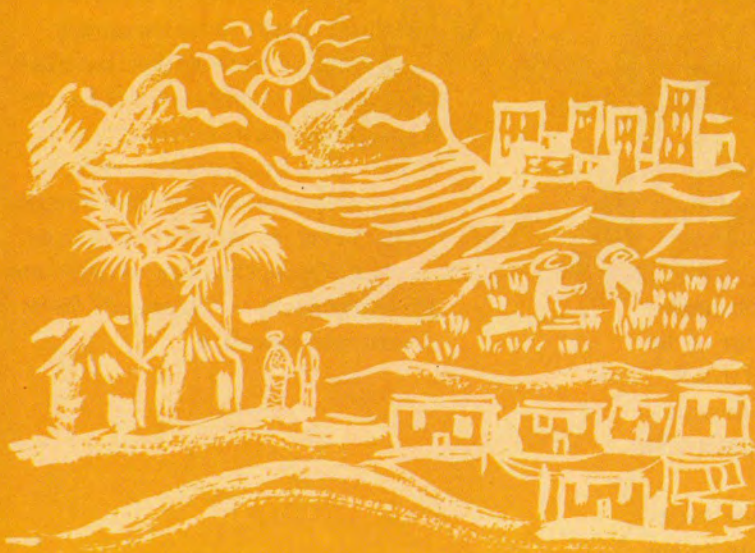
Yes, a Certificate of Participation for those who do some subjects only and a Certificate of Conclusion on completion of the basic course and likewise at the end of the intermediate course.

John has done a lot of travelling and letter writing to promote the courses. In most places they have been received enthusiastically. Courses have started in Tarquaral, Itajaí and Joinville (the largest town in Santa Catarina) in Lages and Joaçaba. Early in 1995 he hopes to have one in Criciúma and another in Florianópolis (the state capital). The aim is for each association to have at least one group. We hope to achieve this in 1995.

One or two churches tried to go it alone but this did not work out. The idea is that the churches should come together in groups of three or four and, so far, this has proved extremely successful. ●

the Lord IS Great

BMS is supporting work within a variety of cultures and amongst people who follow different religions. In every situation the good news is being proclaimed with love and sensitivity so that God may "be honoured more than all the gods."



*The Lord is
great and is
to be highly
praised;
he is to be
honoured
more than
all the gods.
The gods of
all other
nations are
only idols,
but the
Lord
created the
heavens.
Glory and
majesty
surround
him;
power and
beauty fill
his Temple.*

the lord is great

I long to talk about Jesus

Language and culture so often get in the way of telling the story of God's love in Jesus Christ as Ann Bothamley discovered in South India.

Two large brown eyes surrounded by thick black eyebrows and a mop of dark curls peered out at me from beneath the sheet.

"How much sons you have?"

"Well," I replied, "four, I suppose", as I thought of my Hostel boys.

Twelve year old Ahamed was not impressed, he had 18 brothers, but as the days passed we became firm friends. We drew pictures together and gesticulated and laughed at our efforts to communicate.

From a Muslim country far away Ahamed's father had brought his son to the hospital for a Bone Marrow Transplant. It was successful and in time Ahamed returned to his native land. How I had longed to talk to him about Jesus but without a knowledge of Arabic it was impossible.

She lay seemingly asleep on a bed in the middle of the village street. An awning had been set up as a shade from the scorching sun. Women were crying and wailing in their grief. With the temperature at 106°F ice had been packed around the body and close relatives continually fanned away the flies.

The woman's sorrowing husband was surrounded by the men folk of the village. Married just nine



How I had longed to talk about Jesus but without Arabic it was impossible

days many who had come to pay their respects had been at the wedding. Now we came through the dusty streets bearing the customary jasmine-scented garlands to lay on the dead body. For some time we stood silently and then prayed before leaving. The wailing and crying had ceased as we made our way back through the village. This marriage had been arranged and the bride was just 22 years old.

Everyone was assembling for the weekly Bible Study in the sweepers village. Sweat poured off the men as they played their drums and sang their Telegu hymns. The children had gathered at the front but as the men arrived they were soon relegated to the back. The women came in draping their saris over their heads and sat behind the men. Having been removed from the scene of activity the children had become disinterested in the singing and had resorted to rolling on the floor and turning somersaults at the back. What joy, what fun, until an older boy picked each up bodily and sat them against the wall with a sharp tap on the head!

The Bible Study was on light. With power cuts and surrounded by people who had grown up with only the light from small oil lamps in the darkness, stories of light and darkness were very meaningful. Here communication was possible through an able interpreter, although once again, it was in another language from the state north of Tamil Nadu. ●



Opposition & opportunities

One evening there was a knock on the door of the home of Ryder and Heather Rogers in Albania. The guests were invited in and given the customary greetings.

“We are from the Muslim Committee. Do you have government permission to start a church here?” said one of them.

The conversation ended with an *invitation* to meet the Muslim Committee the next week in Tirana. This, Ryder did with David Wheeler (European Baptist Federation Administrator in Albania) and one of our Albanian Christian translators. Things went well until the main Imam entered, stated his views and walked out.

Legally, with democracy, there are no problems about what we are doing. The local mayor sees no problems with using our home as a *Prayer House*, but pressures are still brought on us.

The next week, after a lot of prayer, we opened the Bregu-i-Lumit Christian Bookshop, run by two of the church young people in the village. The shop had only been opened a few hours when two



young Muslim men threatened that if it stayed open the windows would be smashed. Thank God we have had no further problems. ●

Battling in Prayer

About the only time people are early for anything here is for the prayer time we have early Wednesday night. Our front room has been crowded each week with younger and older people wanting to pray.

We start with a time of worship and have translated some of the new songs – *I give praises to your name, Whatever is true*, etc – and people love to sing

Legally, with democracy, there are no problems about what we are doing. The local mayor sees no problems with using our home as a Prayer House, but pressures are still brought on us.



them. Then we get down to praise and prayer.

It is humbling after so many years of being a communicator to be reduced to sweating (literally) over saying a few sentences in prayer, only to hear a gentle giggle over yet another grammatical mistake. Once Ryder changed someone's name from "Hope" to "Sick".

Then people are free to share what they feel the Lord may be saying. It has been revealing, encouraging and challenging to hear what these new Christians are hearing from God.

If anyone needs a special prayer then a few people gather round, lay hands on them and expect God to do things.

Incarnating the gospel

One day, our goods arrived from England just before a van with the body of a 29-year-old neighbour. He was killed in an accident in Italy and left a young wife and two small children. She was told only half-an-hour before. Everyone lined the dusty road standing at their doorways in silence. We stood at ours.

Ryder felt it right to incarnate the gospel and go with the men to the funeral. The women stayed at home so Heather went and sat with them in the widow's home.

As the coffin came out from the home, carried on the shoulders of the family, not a woman was to be seen. It was stirring to walk with over 500 men through the village, travel by bus for over an hour and then be at a Muslim funeral silently praying for people. Again friendships were being reinforced.

That night we were out for supper at the house of a Muslim family the other side of the village. The man asked for a Bible, which he could not understand, so we hope to start some Bible studies in his home. ●

*If anyone needs special prayer
then the people gather round,
lay hands on them and expect
God to do things.*

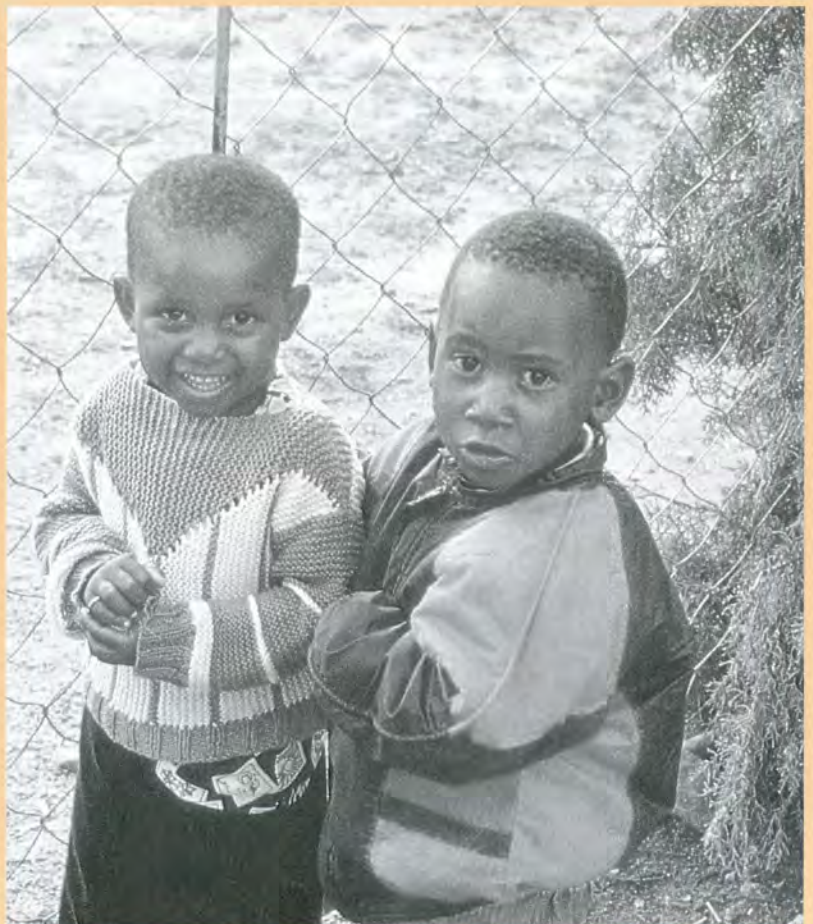
Belief in witchcraft Gwen Hunter urges us to pray for liberation and renewal.

The week leading up to Easter was consecrated as a week of prayer. Each day we followed Jesus on his road to the cross after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and after a short meditation we devoted time to prayer for our own personal walk with Christ and for the corporate witness of the Church.

There are many attacks. At a recent church meeting the name was brought forward of a man who had been out of communion for several years and wanted to be readmitted to Church membership. The report was good but then someone stood up and said they'd heard accusations, in the village at the IME gates, that this man changed into a bull in the night and ravaged the manioc fields of many folk around. There was laughter at first but a serious discussion ensued and it was clear that many believed this to be possible.

Belief in witchcraft is strong even among Christians. Pray for us that there may be a complete break, that Christ will liberate and renew. ●

*Pray for us
that Christ
will liberate
and renew*



the lord is great

Thank you Leaders of the Baptist Union in Moldova have written to say thank you to all those who have been helping them. BMS has been supporting two Moldovan evangelists by a grant from the Fund for the Future.

The Union of Baptist churches gives thanks to God for the freedom to establish new churches with the help of our home missionaries. We give thanks to you for your care of God's work in Moldova. We give you thanks for contributions which enable these missionaries to work full time in Moldova.

The leaders of the Baptist Union inform you that because of your contribution we support 15 missionaries. Every missionary has started his ministry working in the villages and towns of Moldova, where there were no believers beforehand or there were two or three believers. These missionaries spread the good news from home to home in the villages and towns. Already small groups or churches have been formed at which the missionar-

ies preach regularly. They have Bible lessons with grown-ups and children. They organise personal and group meetings with unbelievers. They offer humanitarian help and distribute literature. Every last Thursday of the month they meet in the office of the Baptist Union and present their oral and written reports about their work.

They share their blessings and problems and receive advice and instruction from the leaders of the Union, religious literature for distribution. They receive money for living, petrol and transport.

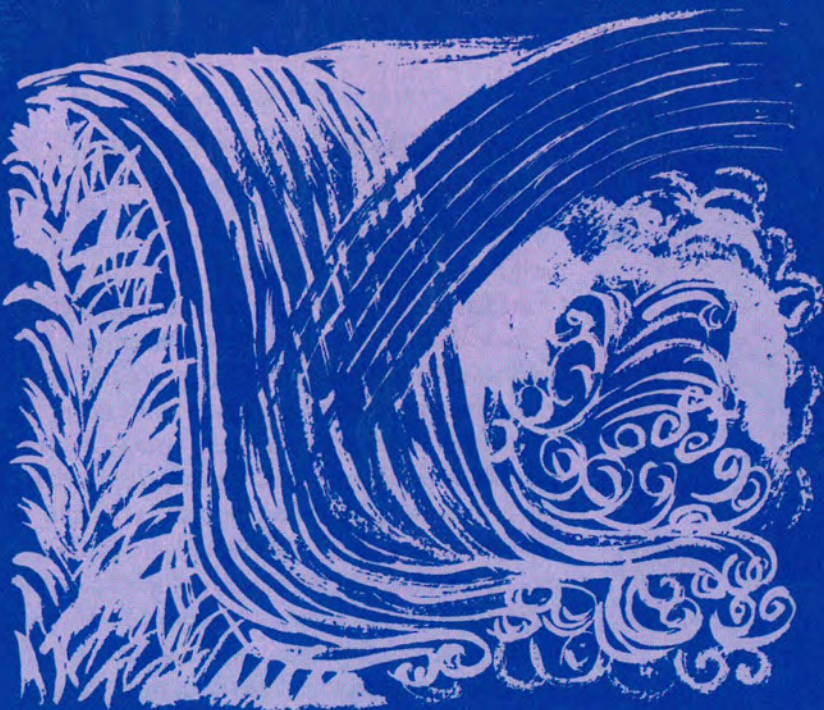
Your contribution for the missionaries we have distributed economically for two years. It is very good to have our home missionaries, who know our traditions, culture, language and the religion of the local population. We are able to spread the good news effectively and plant churches. Our missionaries can do all these things only because of your material support. We thank you for your right attitude to this great work of God in our Republic. ●



*We can do all
these things
only because of
your support.
Thank you!*

Power and beauty

Through BMS supported education and health work, many are finding their lives opening up in ways they never imagined, as they feel the touch of Christ upon their lives. And although bodily suffering may continue, the beauty of a new found faith can shine out to inspire others.



*The gods of
all other
nations are
only idols,
but the
Lord
created the
heavens.*

*Glory and
majesty
surround
him;
power and
beauty fill
his Temple.
Praise the
Lord, all
people on
earth;
praise his
glory...*

power and beauty



*God has opened up a new door and
I've started up our own programme -
with no red tape!*

A new challenge Sue Hedlam reports from Chittagong in Bangladesh on a new work in an inner city slum.

Each Friday we hold a clinic in a slum area of Chittagong setting up primary health care services for those desperately needy people. The mayor has given us an empty school building to use and we are gaining the confidence of the people.

They have such different health needs from the rural people we usually work with. We see jaundice and terrible skin problems due to folk bathing in water contaminated with sewage. The lines of tin huts are a bit like chicken pens and 40,000 people live in a very small area.

The staff are enjoying a new challenge, the patients have remarkable dignity but their physical and spiritual needs are enormous. Pray for our witness in this inner city slum area. ●

A place of tears

Prema Tennekoon is working together with Albanians in the area of nursing education.

Gill took me to see the hospital. The Albanians working there are to be admired. Some of the doctors have struggled on faithfully for years, against all odds.

I was shown around the paediatric unit by the doctor in charge. The wards consist of concrete walls, floors and ceilings with old iron cots in rows, no pictures, no toys, no equipment, everything to depress and nothing to stimulate or brighten up the place. I understand some toys and baby baths have been brought in, but everything gets stolen. What would we do if we had never seen or handled a toy or clean baby bath?

The doctor said some blood tests can be done in the hospital but there are no facilities for investigations. Diagnosis made and treatment given is based only on simple observations. The babies are all wrapped up in clothes unable to move or kick about. Have they got any muscle tone one wonders? Others were crying in obvious pain and discomfort. Yes, this is a place of tears. *How do we start to touch the broken hearts?*

All the wards are the same. Yet no situation is completely hopeless if we have Jesus. Gill introduced me to a man about 30, he had asked prayer for healing and said he was much better. As we talked another young man said he wanted us to pray for him. He was breathless and in pain. His wife was with him, so we prayed with them both and gave them Christian leaflets trying to tell them Jesus loves and cares about them. Gill will visit them again.

Many are eager to read and asked for bibles, books and leaflets. It seems that these dear people have been so deprived of love and care for so long, they so appreciate you even trying to speak a few words in Albania. Their eyes are full of tears too! All the world needs to know of the injustices these people have and are still suffering. All the world needs to wake up to sharing its wealth so everyone is fed, clothed, housed and cared for as individuals.

So please pray for us all, for Albania and its people, for wisdom to those in authority struggling to improve situations - Albanians trying hard to help themselves. Pray expecting great miracles spiritually as well in practical, financial and material help so Albanians can improve the quality of their lives. I



“How do we start to touch the broken hearts?” in Albania and India.



Carol Whitmee in her office

have been reading *Albania Who Cares?* by Bill Hamilton of the BBC. It makes you weep but you need to read it if you have a heart for Albania. It helps one to understand a little of the untold suffering of fellow human beings. Thank you for your prayer, and participation in the work here. ●

What did you eat today?

Carole Whitmee describes some of her work in one of the poorest states in India

A recently published report giving the latest estimates on poverty show that more than 312 million people in India live below the poverty line. It also says that Orissa is still the poorest state.

One of the newest arrivals in our hostel is Ahalya. My first contact with her came a few days after Christmas, when she arrived in a borrowed dress with her mother and four year old sister Kesaliya. Her father had died and they were in desperate circumstances. I asked Kesaliya what she had eaten that day.

“Pokhal,” she said, which is left over rice from the previous day which has fermented.

“What did you eat the day before?”

“Rice.”

“What did you eat with the rice?”

“Salt.”

“And on Christmas day?” I asked.

“Rice and salt.” She grinned.

At a time when most people do their utmost to have new clothes and something special to eat, this little family had nothing.

When they brought Ahalya to the hostel, her mother was in tears. Their mud house had collapsed in the rain. Although we hadn't intended to take Kesaliya in too, I felt I had to do so. With some difficulty we managed to persuade the headmaster that she was five years old. She is very tiny but very independent.

Geetanjali is another new girl in the hostel and is having some difficulty in settling down. We give a Bible to all new children and to all children reaching class four.

In the Juniors of Girls' Brigade we were talking about the things we could thank God for.

Immediately Geetanjali was on her feet saying she wanted to thank God for giving her a Bible.

Geetanjali's mother is a Christian but her father is a Hindu. Pankajini comes from a family of new Christians. ●

Who is doing the learning? Since arriving back in Trapiá, after Home Assignment, Daveen Wilson's life has been dominated by teaching.

Debbie is my most important student, and teaching her all the demands of the British National Curriculum has taken most of my energy and creativity. Both of us are sure that prayer is the reason our school has gone so well and that it has mostly been a lot of fun. We thank God and we thank you.

In the first term, in the afternoons, I also taught the third year of Brazilian school to two teenagers - we covered the whole year in less than three months. Again, very hard work, but tremendously rewarding, and I'm sure I learnt more than they did. Because of the elections in 1994 the local school was re-activated after Carnival and I taught English there one afternoon a week - mainly to give the terribly paid teacher a bit of encouragement. My other teaching is something I've been longing to do for ages. As a trial project, I'm teaching two ladies to read, on two evenings a week. Again, it has been so exciting seeing them go from being convinced they'd never manage it to realising they're doing it. Their self esteem has grown accordingly and already they're passing on the new skills to husbands and children. We've had some riotous sessions and I've learnt so much from them about life here. The question in all this teaching is, "Who is doing the learning - me or them?" ●



Debbie is my most important student.

Forgotten education "The start of the school year is still something of an enigma," Janet Claxton reported from Zaire in November. "Kinshasa schools started in September. The official date of 10 October came and went with a semi-official postponement of one week to allow people to find money."

The pupils or their parents have now got to pay monthly sums so that the teachers can be paid. This seems to be the only viable way to run a school now that the state appears to have forgotten education - along with most other things.

However, the teachers won't teach until they've been paid (outstanding since February). They won't get paid unless the pupils pay. The pupils won't come, let alone pay until the teachers start teaching. It's a vicious circle. And where, in a place like Pimu, will parents find enough money to pay? Education is not held in high esteem by many families here.

Eventually the head and I took unilateral action and started courses for sixth and fifth years. Between us we cover five of the six major subjects.

Education is one of the casualties of State negligence. At last it has been agreed at Pimu that each pupil will pay a certain sum each month so that the teachers may be paid. Obviously, the more pupils there are the more money there will be - or perhaps the contributions will be less.

It took a lot of hard work on the part of the head and the Pastor to persuade some of the teachers to work. One started teaching, when told that if he didn't, he would have to move out of the school house on the mission.

Another started coming part-time when he learned that I was teaching one of his classes (temporarily to motivate younger pupils and give them something to do). There is no certainty that a reasonable number of teachers will be present on any one day.

There could be six of us - or only two so we have no time-table yet. At the change of lessons it's a bit like the dance where, when the music stops you look for another partner! We are still short of teachers so some of us are overloaded. If it wasn't for the fact that I continue to teach 5th and 6th year Maths together, such is the standard of those in the 6th year, there would not be enough hours to fit all the classes in. Fortunately, classes that I teach are not large, yet, although the 3rd year continues to grow. So far, 64 pupils have signed on for the 1st year class. I'm glad I don't teach them! ●

Their self esteem has grown and already they are passing on their new skills to husbands and children



Prayer is the reason our school has gone so well and that it mostly has been a lot of fun. We thank God and we thank you.

power and beauty

Suporn There are already 500,000 cases of HIV reported in Thailand and by the year 2,000 the figure is expected to be 1.4 million. These statistics only begin to mean something when you know someone who is HIV positive or who has developed AIDS. "One of these is Suporn and we're trying our best to help her," reports Jacqui Wells.

Suporn is from the Karen tribe and she is only 19 years old. She married in August 1993 and came to her marriage completely pure (a virgin). She knew her husband, as a husband, for only two weeks and within that time she became infected with the HIV virus and also conceived a child. She, like many others, is the 'innocent victim'.

Her husband Chair Wah Tuu, also Karen and from a Christian family, made the mistake of visiting a Brothel when he was a student and unfortunately he paid the price! Soon after they were married, he became very ill and by February this year he was dead. I visited him in hospital when he was suffering from cerebral malaria (and AIDS) and I also carried on visiting when he returned to his mountain village. I can tell you all that it's quite frightening when you see someone in the last stages of AIDS.



*I didn't think
I'd be able to
smile again.
But just look
at my son.*

For Chair Wah Tuu there was some beauty in his death because the family and his Church family lovingly cared for him right up to the time he died. They wanted in some way to share in his suffering and that was 'beautiful' to see. He died knowing he was forgiven; knowing he was God's child. Chair Wah Tuu was only 25 years old.

Since then we've found out that Suporn is HIV positive. She asked, "Why, why me, will I suffer like my husband?" These are hard questions to face and it's even harder trying to answer. We've cried together and we've prayed together and Suporn's family and I have pledged to help her all we can.

She delivered a beautiful baby boy. His name is Johar which is the Karen form of John. She was quite radiant when we visited her in hospital and she smiled and looked so lovingly at her son. I have also visited her at home and we praised God together for the new life he had given us.

She said: "Jacqui, I shed so many tears for my husband and it was so hard for me to watch him die... I didn't think I'd be able to smile again". "But just look at my son..."

Listening to her I was the one with tears in my eyes. ●



Financial Report

in brief

*bring an
offering
and come
into his
Temple.
Bow down
before the
Holy One
when he
appears;*

GENEROUS GIVING

Supporters of the Baptist Missionary Society gave £3,168,315 last year, an increase of £139,105 on 1993. It was a figure which prompted acting treasurer Mervyn Hancock to tell the BMS General Committee: "We're not only very grateful to churches, to individuals but also to God for this generous giving."

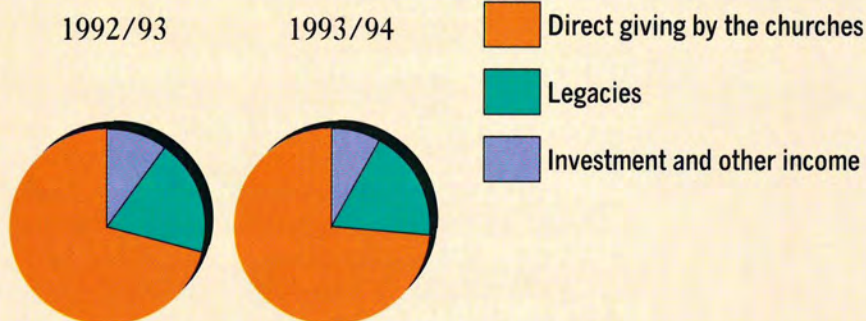
Added to this was investment income of £333,637, legacies of £712,591 and other income of £15,131, bringing the total revenue to £4,229,674, down £50,929 on the previous year.

Total spending last year at £4,269,646 was £44,717 lower than the previous year. As well as a freeze on salaries and allowances in 1994, the BMS made savings of £195,557 in buildings and transport grants, and £43,540 in administration costs.

But Mervyn Hancock went on: "Many of these savings were one-off and they will not help with the current year's budget." ●

bring an offering

INCOME



Where the money was spent

BMS Spending 1993/94

There was a slight increase in overseas mission work spending; £2,897,847 in 1993/94 compared with £2,896,395 the previous year, but £165,303 less than the budget estimate.

Spending on promotion and education in world mission, and recruitment of missionaries, at £688,123 was £2,629 lower than the previous year (£690,752) and £9,827 less than anticipated in the budget.

Administration cost the society £683,676, a drop of £43,540 on the previous year (£727,216) and £74,174 less than the budget estimate.

Where the money came from

BMS Income 1993/94

Contributions and donations to the society by churches and individuals rose slightly last year. At £3,168,315, the figure was £139,105 above the 1993 total of £3,029,210 but £250,635 below the 1993/94 budget estimate.

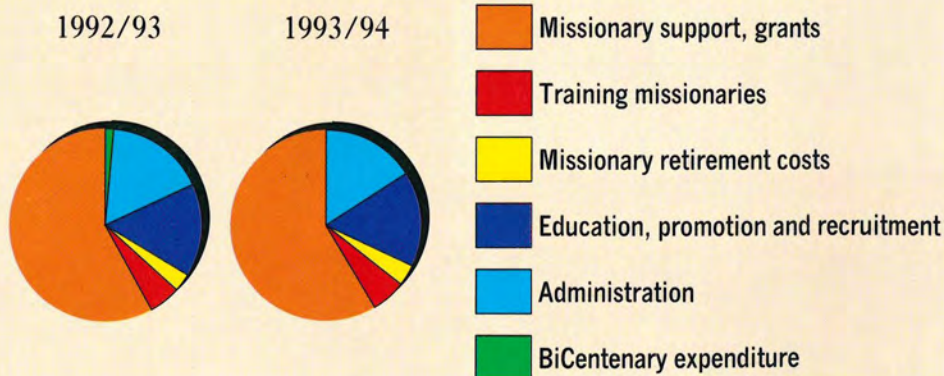
By far the largest proportion of direct giving was for general work for which £2,686,433 was donated. Women's Work brought in £135,445 while £325,259 was given for medical work through the Birthday Scheme and other sources. Other gifts amounted to £21,178.

Legacies, at £712,591, were down on the previous year (£820,542) but £62,591 more than anticipated in the budget.

Investment income totalled £333,637, compared with £413,323 for the previous year, but exceeded the budget estimate by £53,637.

The year ended with a £38,631 deficit, which was £111,369 less than the figure the society anticipated it would need to draw from reserves to balance the books.

EXPENDITURE



bring an offering

Income	31.10.93	31.10.94
Direct giving by the churches	3,029,210	3,168,315
Legacies	820,542	712,591
Investment and other income	430,851	348,768
Total income	4,280,603	4,229,674

Expenditure

Missionary support, grants to overseas churches and other expenses	2,541,181	2,508,484
Training missionaries and overseas personnel	227,635	255,013
Missionary retirement costs	127,579	153,679
Education, promotion and recruitment	690,752	688,123
Administration	727,216	683,676
BiCentenary expenditure	66,141	(1,341)
Total expenditure	4,380,504	4,268,305
Deficit	-99,901	-38,631
Total	4,280,603	4,229,674



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Stamps, PIPS and other projects

Stamps and other collectibles helped to raise £4,329 (net) for the society in 1994, thanks to the BMS Stamp Bureau, run by three philatelists.

The bureau, headed by Richard Camp, from Telford, Shropshire, has been making a contribution to BMS since 1928.

Stamps - loose or in valuable collections - from supporters arrive at Baptist House in Didcot, from where they are taken for sorting by David Beaumont, of Cholsey, Oxon, who with a band of helpers, trims and selects suitable material for sale.

Richard, responsible for British stamps, and Dr Douglas Neilson, of Dundee, who handles foreign and Commonwealth stamps, sell through stamp fairs and to subscribers on their regular lists.

Occasionally, BMS supporters donate collections which, after careful valuation by the bureau experts, have fetched handsome sums.

Other collectibles which swell the funds include postcards, tea and cigarette cards, a work overseen by Chris Breakell. Coins, handled by Richard, tend to be mostly loose change donated by returning foreign holidaymakers. These are stored and offered to people locally who are going abroad.

Richard said his coin work has known its highlights; one specimen, a Greek coin dating from 200BC, fetched £75 at auction after being examined by numismatist Walter Fancutt, a retired Baptist minister.

Inquiries from collectors should be made to Richard Camp (01952 247783).

Stamps, coins and cards are always gratefully received at the BMS in Didcot.

Birthdays scheme

The BMS Birthday Scheme, in aid of medical work, continues to be well-supported and raised £197,342 in 1994, £2,951 more than the previous year.

BMS /Operation agri

The BMS/Operation Agri Joint Harvest Appeal realised £118,136, against £114,477 the previous year. Half is being used to train and support BMS missionaries working in development and agriculture and half goes to Operation Agri to support BMS agricultural and development programmes.

Projects

Partners in Projects (PIPS), launched in 1992, links churches or groups to a specific project overseas. In 1993/94 PIPS schemes in 21 countries were available for support.

These projects had, at the end of February 1995, brought in £81,271 in cash donations and a further £114,332 in pledges. A total of £195,603.

PIPS provides a focus for groups to work together to raise more manageable amounts to move God's work of mission forward.

Whether it is £300 or £3,000, British Baptists can choose a project with a realistic target for their resources.

And there are more than 100 PIPS at any time from buying medicines for world trouble-spots to funding church-planting in Latin America, from supporting work among blind girls in Dhaka to supporting an evangelistic youth Action Team.

To find out more about PIPS, contact your nearest BMS Area or National Co-ordinator. ●

Tremble before him

All that we attempt to do in mission flows out of a true worship of God where, in humility before him, we seek his will for ourselves and for all people. For individuals this sometimes means not only "going" but also returning. For the Society this means renewing our vision for mission and working out a strategy for tomorrow.



*Praise the
Lord, all
people on
earth;
praise his
glory and
might.*

*Praise the
Lord's
glorious
name;
bring an
offering and
come into
his Temple.*

*Bow down
before the
Holy One
when he
appears;
tremble before
him, all the
earth!*

tremble before him

We made the decision to leave

For James and Susan Grote the decision to leave El Salvador and to return to the UK with their family was one of the hardest decisions they have had to make.

James writes:

On Friday afternoon, 18 March, I was on my way to Jucuapa, about half an hour drive west of San Miguel. Since arriving back in the country at the beginning of February I had been working at the Baptist church in Jucuapa and making the journey three or four times a week. It is a quick and easy trip along the Pan-American Highway out of San Miguel for about 20 miles and then two miles up a winding country lane to Jucuapa, a sizeable town on a hill.

Driving down a long hill before the turn-off to Jucuapa, a silver jeep was tailing me. It followed me off the main road and up the road to the town.

After about a mile it overtook. We passed some houses on either side and then its back door opened

and two men leapt out with shot guns and ran towards me. I jumped out of the car but they forced me back in and made me lie, face down, in the back of the car. One of them held a gun to my back, the other jumped in the driving seat and swung the car round. We drove for about ten minutes.

They gave me my instructions - they would leave me somewhere. I would have to

wait for two hours before trying to get home. If I left in less than two hours someone would kill me. I repeated the instructions to them several times to make sure that I had got it right. As soon as the car stopped I was told to jump out. The man who had been in the back with me made an opening in a hedge that led into a field. He shouted at me to run. I ran down the field which sloped away from the road and jumped into a ditch. I waited there for two and a half hours and then caught a bus back home.

That evening we made the decision to leave El Salvador. Susan and I were frightened for ourselves and also for Cameron and Daniel for whom, we believe, we couldn't take the risk of living in such a violent and uncertain society. The threat and the risk had always been there, always been a possibili-



Members of the congregation gathered in our house

ty, but now we had encountered it and our paths had crossed, with just a hint of the violent forces which controlled this land, we felt that we couldn't take the risk of encountering it again. So we made the decision to leave.

Holy Week was our last week in San Miguel. We waited for the end of the week when we would say goodbye to people. We waited for the end of something - a sort of death. That's what it felt like. These people whom we had visited and welcomed into our home, prayed with, studied with, laughed with, cried with and shared our life with, touched and embraced and who had been there in the flesh for two-and-a-half years, in a few days time would no longer be there for us and perhaps we would never see them again.

On the Saturday before Easter, Holy Saturday, members of a congregation that we had been working with in San Miguel gathered in our house to say goodbye. In the worship we shared together, a candle was passed round and, as each person held it in turn, they said thank you to us for being there with them. There were many tears, even sobbing. It was very sad. Holy Saturday.

Wherever we end up we will tell the story of El Salvador, its suffering and hope, death and resurrection. We can't do anything else, not least because that's what they have asked us to do and that's what we promised. And something tells me that these people who are no longer there in the flesh for us to see, to touch and to hold will come alive for us in a new way. They will rise and rise again as we tell their stories and share the gospel of Jesus Christ. ●





The home base The management restructuring of the BMS was completed during the year. The Society now believes that it is in a better position to fulfil the "Great Commission" into the next millennium.



Top: Carolyn Green
Above:
left-Phillip Marsden
Right- Richard Wells

We have been grateful to Carolyn Green for her survey of opinions of the constituency. Largely based on her work, the *Missionary Herald* has been further improved and the recommendations for the changes to the Department of Constituency Support, accepted by the General Committee in October

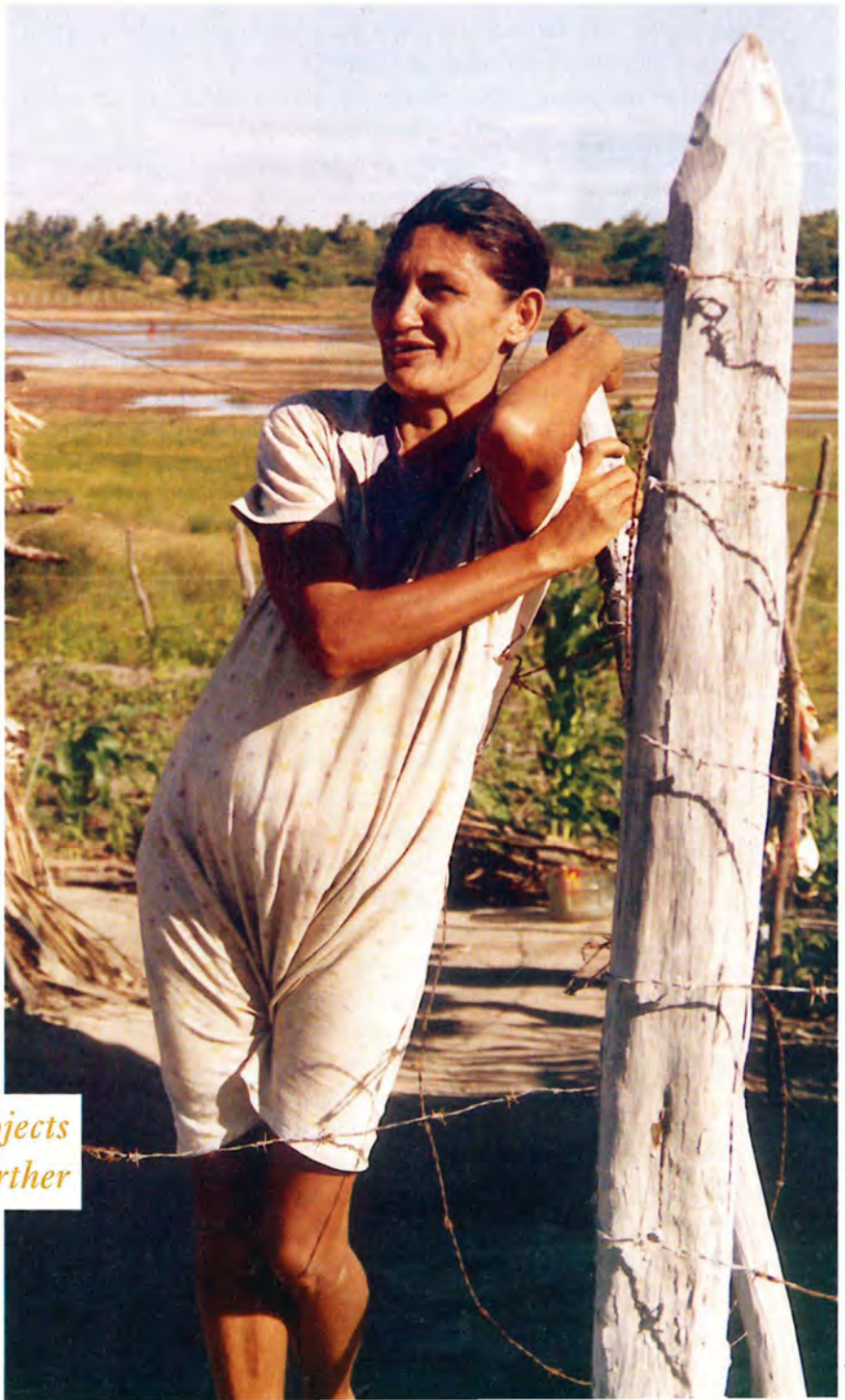
1994, have been made.

In the Department for Constituency Support, Richard Wells has been appointed as Publicity Manager and Phillip Marsden is the new Young People's and Children's Co-ordinator. We have sadly said goodbye to Helen Matthew's who was responsible for Junior Education and promotion work.

During the year, the World Mission Link programme continued, the Partners in Projects scheme was developed further, a series of income generating leaflets were produced, a new Relief Fund leaflet was sent out to the churches in December, the Moving Mountains Project was completed, and a new general (women's) project and Children's project prepared.

The BMS Area Representatives have a change of name, Co-ordinators, which more correctly defines their role in enabling churches in their areas to enter into world-mission through the BMS.

Stephen Woolcock, a member of the 28:19 Action Team to Lille in 1993-94, joined Didcot staff for a year to look after 1994-95 teams. Suzanne Linnell has joined the General Director's team as Secretary to the Board of Management. ●



The Partners in Projects scheme was developed further

tremble before him

Working out a new role

"It's been a strange year," said Eric Watson who completed his year as the first President of the Baptist Missionary Society.

It has been a challenging and stimulating time. It's been a year of trying to lay the foundations for a new office and working out the role as President, which is very different from being Chairman of the Society.

Following a visit to Brazil last year I am looking forward to going to Bangladesh. The opportunity to see something of the overseas work of the Society at first hand has given me a greater and growing appreciation of the quality and dedication of BMS missionaries.

It has been an inspiration to represent the BMS on several occasions during the year.

I was at the EBF Lillehammer Conference in Norway. This was the first occasion in which Baptists from Eastern Europe were able to attend in strength. It was so good to share their joy. We were aware of the sacrifices so many of them had made to be there.

Then it was a privilege to be President when the BMS played host to the first ABAM (Association for Baptist Action in Mission) meeting and to welcome and meet many leaders of our overseas partners.

It was a great thrill too to be there at the formation of the Fellowship of British Baptists (FBB) and to see the development of much closer co-operation between BMS and the Baptist Unions of Scotland, Wales and Great Britain. At the grass-roots, particularly in Scotland, I found the churches showing an increasing warmth to the Society now that its commitment to evangelism (always there) is becoming more obvious.

At the Baptist Union of Scotland Assembly, when we talked about the freeze in missionary allowances and staff salaries, some people got a rude awakening. It made them see that they should be doing more and not leave all the sacrifices to missionaries and staff.

It has been a sad year also. Personally I have lost two good friends, with whom I was looking forward to sharing this special year, in the death of Peter Barber, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Scotland, and Arthur Garman, BMS Honorary Treasurer. ●



Eric Watson, President of BMS, puts his signature to the covenant

The signed covenants were exchanged between Unions and BMS



The newly formed FBB group getting down to work



It's Birmingham not Bulawayo

Things don't always go as we plan them but often God uses for his own purposes what at first appears negative. This is something one of the 28:19 Youth Action teams discovered last year...

After a successful month of training at Didcot, Selly Oak and Histon, we departed excitedly for ten days of goodbyes before leaving on 14 October for Zimbabwe. The 13 October arrived, along with *the phone call*. We were thrilled to learn that Birmingham beckoned and Africa had to wait. The visas weren't coming and we weren't going.

We were delayed by three weeks, two of which were spent at Glebe Farm Baptist church in Birmingham. Disappointment soon disappeared as we got involved in the church activities. This included pastoral visits, prayer walking, youth clubs, organising an open-house party as well as doing a Sunday service. Because of a second delay in obtaining our visas we were able to stay on and get involved in their alternative to a Halloween party called Light Fantastic.

We were sad when it came to moving on because the church was so welcoming that we quickly fitted in as part of the family. We had also seen God's reason for sending us there as an encouragement for them and as a team building process for us.

A few days before leaving, we heard that our visas were ready, but a placement in Wales had already been set up for us and in order not to disappoint Marc, our token Welsh "Bachgen" (boy) we merrily trundled off to South Wales. We were welcomed with open arms by the wonderful, warm Welsh. Paint brushes and plaster boards were soon thrust into our hands and we helped church members get the newly renovated church, once a textile mill, ready on time.

The wetness of Wales now seems a complete contrast to the 33°C plus, and brilliant sunshine of Bulawayo. ●

These lines cannot show the weeks of thought, prayer and discussion which led to our decision.



Difficult decisions

Disappointments, changes of plan and even a "call" to return home are all part of the missionary life and through it all the Christian worker must have a humility before God and a willingness to trust him in all things.

We (Chris and Christine Spencer) cannot give you any encouraging news about the church in Le Havre. Our membership has actually dropped as people have moved from the town. The English family returned to the UK in the summer, a move which was right for them but which has left a big gap in the fellowship.

Ian was our church secretary and musician. Christine is getting used to playing our little electric organ. She is also leading the Sunday school. Plans for several to share in teaching the children on a rota system haven't worked out, so at the moment she is doing all the teaching, with a couple taking it in turns to supervise the little ones.

We have another Zairian lady and her three children worshipping with us. It means, however, that we can have nine children, ranging from 18 months to twelve years, crammed into one small room.

This brought home to us the need for adequate premises. We look, but a building, which combines the size and situation we want with a price we can afford, eludes us. It is a dream we would like to see fulfilled before the summer of 1995.

Why then? Because that is when our 20 years or so service with the BMS will be coming to an end. We will be returning to England to live. We had hoped that Rachel would be able to join Ruth at Friends' school in September but because of BMS policy that missionary children in Western Europe should be educated locally, and the financial difficulties the Society is facing, BMS felt unable to agree.

The English and French education systems are different it would cause difficulties later on if Rachel had to switch part-way through her secondary schooling.

We do not feel it right to commit ourselves to another six or seven years in France and the girls are keen to be at school together. A return to the UK seemed the only answer. These few lines cannot show the weeks of thought, prayer and discussion which led to that decision, nor can they express our mixed feelings. It will be good to be a complete family for a few years, but uprooting ourselves again and leaving friends and God's work here will be hard. ●

Judge the people with equity

The BMS is first and always a missionary society, but if we are to make known the truth that God is a God of love, justice and fairness we cannot ignore the oppressive injustices of the world.



*Say to all the nations,
“The Lord is king!*

*The earth is set firmly in place and cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with justice.”*

*Be glad, earth and sky!
Roar, sea, and every creature in you;
be glad, fields, and every thing in you!*

Working and giving together

The Association for Baptist Action in Mission (ABAM) moved quickly in November to assist Angolan Baptists. First of all they agreed to send a letter to the warring groups in Angola, the government and UNITA, pleading for them to end the war and work towards peace.

"We are encouraged that within a week of the sending of our letters to the combatants a cease-fire agreement was signed," David Martin, ABAM Secretary/Treasurer, wrote to ABAM members at the end of December.

He continued, "However, we realise that there will be much to do before peace, reconciliation and reconstruction become realities."

The truth of that has been borne out during the uneasy peace that has existed since then. Constant small skirmishes, unreported in the world's press, increase the chances of renewed full-scale fighting.

Even if the peace accord is fully implemented there remains the problem of thousands of refugees, particularly orphan children living on the streets and beaches of Luanda. There are an estimated ten million landmines scattered throughout Angola, planted by the warring parties in the different conflicts which have plagued the country in the last 35 years. Every day new landmine victims join the thousands of other amputees who are to be seen on Angola's streets.

ABAM, which brings together BMS's overseas partners in a sharing of resources to meet the challenges of mission today, decided to help the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA) in its caring ministry. They are to support a project to care for 300-350 children, war-orphans between the ages of seven and 15.

Responding to a request for assistance from Alvaro Rodrigues, IEBA General Secretary, promises of help were made by several of the participating Baptist partners. The Council of Baptist Churches in North India promised 350 blankets. They are also suggesting that they contribute one day's salary to the project.

The small Belgium Baptist Union has offered clothes and medicines. They have also asked the King to see whether the military can offer some supplies.

Portugal and Brazil are looking to supply text books. Others promised pencils, paper, canned food and medicines. Indonesia spoke of taking up a special offering and both Jamaica and Nicaragua

promised to send money.

BMS, with the help of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, is hoping to provide tents, medicines, food and other supplies.

The President of Angola, José Eduardo Dos Santos, replied to ABAM's letter on 3 January. He wrote, "We are convinced that the foundation stone is laid for the construction of peace and consequently of a new era in the relationships between Angolans of different political strains. For this reason I repeat to you that we will not stint any effort so that the commitments which have now been undertaken may become fulfilled in their entirety."●



There will be much to do before peace and reconciliation become realities



They eat babies for breakfast

For over a year Baptists in Bulgaria, along with other evangelical Christians, have been suffering increasing discrimination. They have been reporting growing opposition and abuse.

Following the years of Communist oppression, the Baptist Union of Bulgaria, with which BMS has a partnership agreement, enjoyed freedom of worship and the opportunity to witness and evangelise. That has now come to an end.

Increasingly state-owned television and newspapers are publishing malicious lies like the news report in one paper entitled "Baptists eat babies for breakfast", a twisted reference to the communion service. Baptists believe this campaign is inspired by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

The President of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria has consistently been denied any opportunity to refute the false accusations being made.

It all came to a head in February when the Mayor of Sofia announced that, on 1 March, he was going to take back some property previously acquired by Baptists. They had obtained a permit to build a school and orphanage on the site and had already spent \$175,000 on the project, funds which had been donated by a variety of sources both within and outside Bulgaria.

At the request of the EBF, Baptists within Europe and elsewhere were asked to write and fax to the Mayor of Sofia and "ask that he not annul the contracts with the Baptists. Assure him that the world is watching, and that Baptists around the world are interested in this case."

The result, according to a report from the EBF was "a great outpouring of letters and faxes, many from the UK, to the Mayor of Sofia, as well as a number of foreign ministries being contacted in various countries throughout Europe and North America."

The city council delayed a decision until April, but the signs were good. One Bulgarian Baptist leader believes that they now have to forget large evangelistic meetings and go back to the practice of one-to-one evangelism which they used during the years of Communist rule.

"Also there needs to be a deeper social involvement by Evangelical Christians within Bulgarian society so that people may realise the love of Christ by our actions," he said. ●



"A great outpouring of letters and faxes to the mayor of Sofia"





We peer through this tiny window that is El Salvador and wonder if it helps us to recognise the realities in other conflicts



Your freedom or mine In El Salvador the elections have been held and some talk of democracy. But what has changed for ordinary people and how does it affect the rest of us. David Mee enables us to see through El Salvadoran eyes.

The elections brought a different kind of role for some of the members of our congregation, El Cordero De Dios (Lamb of God) Baptist Church. About ten of the "flock" were involved in organising and making visits to rural communities, sometimes staying away a couple of weeks at a time and walking for hours to reach isolated homes.

The purpose was to enable illiterate and first-time voters to apply for their electoral identification cards, and to understand enough to be able to turn up at the right table and cast their vote.

Their experiences made it clearer still that the development of democracy is not only about removing the troops from the public sphere, dismantling death squads and reforming the judicial and electoral system. It also demands teaching people to read and write, encouraging an atmosphere in which the open debate of ideas, political or otherwise, can freely occur, and raising the economic standards of living so that the poorest can find time, and bus fare, to participate in such dynamics.

We peer through this tiny window that is El Salvador and wonder if it helps us to recognise something of the realities in other conflict and post-war contexts. It feels, at first, to be a window onto a great deal of human darkness, a realisation that tragedy goes far beyond the headline-catching deaths and is carried on in the hearts and minds of

the anonymous living.

South Africa is not "fixed" now Nelson Mandela is President and apartheid is done. Rwanda is far more than its unbearable body-count. The Gulf war, Somalia, Palestine, Angola, and their consequences are replayed every day in the day-to-day living of millions of people, faceless again when the wisps of international interest have evaporated.

Northern Ireland cries out for its elusive peace, and who should be included in the search so it may have deep and effective roots? And just because the British National Party didn't win seats in the last local showing of hands doesn't mean the evil curse of racism is gone. Not even from our churches.

Yet at the same time we see how so much of El Salvador's hope, its present and future, is held in place by remarkable people who simply don't give up. Some have little choice, for to do anything but strive constantly to the limits of their endurance would mean no daily bread for their children.

Others choose to design their efforts not around their own needs and comforts but, leaving that to take care of itself, choose instead the more subversive option of the well-being of others.

Mandela said: "Your freedom and mine cannot be separated."

Be they in South Africa, Northern Ireland or El Salvador, in Huddersfield, Birmingham or London, such people deserve more acknowledgement and support from the rest of us than they usually get. Humble, imperfect lives, unaware of their own glory, they are worthy of celebration. ●

Let the *fields* be jubilant

In so many areas of the world the fields are anything but jubilant. Poverty and hunger stalk countless numbers of people in the developing world. Over the past year, BMS has been involved in a ministry of development, enabling people to increase the quality of their lives.



*Be glad, earth
and sky!
Roar, sea,
and every
creature in
you;
be glad, fields,
and
everything
in you!*

*The trees in the
woods will
shout for joy
when the
Lord comes to
rule the
earth.*

*He will rule
the peoples of
the world
with justice
and fairness.*

let the fields be jubilant

Retaining a clear vision Work at Nepal Hydro and Electric is slow due to continuing financial problems for the Khimti Hydropower Project. But it has given Tim Lehane and others time to get a few things sorted out and prepared ahead of time.

My own particular role has been to purchase a couple of computers and, together with a donated secondhand plotting machine, set up a computer-aided design system in the drawing office. I now spend most of my time training the other engineers on the system so that when the Khimti work starts coming in, we will be able to do a fast and professional job.

This is all part of our "Expansion Plan" to increase our capabilities in order that we can offer an alternative to buying everything from overseas, so that the money can rather go to Nepali workers, tradesmen and engineers. A country that does not foster its own people and resources will remain forever poor and consequently reliant on foreign aid.

The United Mission to Nepal is currently in the



process of re-evaluating its policy on Hydropower development. The venture has been a great success in that a solid capability has been built up. Nepali people at all levels have been trained and promoted so that now we are approaching the time when some of the Mission related companies are strong enough to stand alone without UMN support.

Another factor that these large-scale projects, such as Khimti, take a lot of personnel resources and some people feel it may be better to use them in the promotion of smaller-scale "micro-hydro" type projects. The issue is, of course, complex but the important thing is that we retain a clear vision for whatever we do, making sure that we are serving the Nepali people and doing so visibly in the Spirit of Christ. ●

Serving the Nepali people
and doing so visibly in the
spirit of Christ



Let the fields be jubilant

God lives in Zaire "If it were true that there were just one place where God built a permanent residence, we would be tempted to say that God lives in Zaire," reports Mr Lusadisu who is responsible for Agri-Development projects in Zaire and particularly for the Lower River project.

God has blessed us in Zaire, despite all the turbulence and tribulation of every kind. Problems are more severe in every way, notably economically, monetarily, socially and above all politically. These problems do not prevent us from working and going wherever we feel there is need. Last time we mentioned the awareness campaign we carried out in various districts. We were anxious initially as the parishes did not immediately respond. However, at the beginning of April, when we announced the 1994 market garden programme, we felt that we had not preached in the desert. We received many requests for seeds and tools (machetes, hoes, rakes, watering cans, etc). Then we felt affirmed in the project and wanted to carry it further.

The project has now reached a phase of maturity. We set out with the aim of assisting the people to become self-sufficient in order to improve their lifestyle. Today we feel we must take steps to ensure the survival of the project, in order that, in the medium and long-term, it can finance certain rural activities. This is the case of the farm at Mwavu and the orchard a Ndimba-Lukunga. An investment, however small, is indispensable in order to launch this new activity. We will plan the project in order that it become self-financing. ●

Market garden

We began in April by finding out people's requirements as regards tools and seeds and distributing



them as we could. We used our technical equipment on the land. The agronomist dealt with technical problems whilst the person in charge of women's work worked with the women to encourage further self-sufficiency.

When we gave seeds away free, people asked for them even if they did not need them, selling them or keeping them until out-of-date. So we adopted a system of share-cropping where we get 15 per cent of the harvest.

During this campaign we were able to work in 16 parishes in three of the five districts covered by the project. We set up a service of commercialisation in order to assist the people to sell their produce by taking it to the market at Mbanza-Ngungu where they themselves sold it. The results are encouraging.

The Lower River Agricultural Programme is involved in a variety of other projects.

We are satisfied with the direction we have taken, arming the people to protect themselves against hunger, illness and poor living conditions.

The whole country is shaken by this merciless recession. We recognise that whatever the catastrophe, death is not a necessary destiny. Those who are saved can try and save those in danger. The dead do not bury themselves. It is the living who bury them. We are asking those who are in a better position to think of a wounded Africa to continue to think of the wounds of those afflicted. It is biblical: "...the strong help the weak."

Our plans for the future are not unrealistic. A Kongo proverb says: "What will be eaten tomorrow is prepared the day before." For a better future, a plan is necessary now. ●



Relief fund Churches responded well to the appeal to top up the BMS Relief Fund and the Society was able to send something like £90,000 to places like Angola, Rwanda, India, Nicaragua, Thailand, Serbia, Croatia and Moldova. The grant to Moldova was £5,000 to enable the Baptist Union there to help people hit by a disastrous flood. Here is their response.

Greetings to you, our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. We give thanks to our great God for his mercy to us, that he sent us freedom and we are able to proclaim good news everywhere in Moldova.

We have many other possibilities to tell about Christ, and this makes us happy. We try to do our best to spread good news of his Kingdom.

We waited for freedom for many years but, together with joy, we have had many disasters in Moldova this year. For a whole year there was no rain then hailstorms destroyed the field crops and the fruit crops. The last great disaster was the flood. The victims of the flood were both believers and non-believers. Our poor government helped them a little bit, but it was not enough. We visited, together with their pastors, the victims of the flood and gave them the money which you sent. The families gave thanks to God and to you for the love you have shown to them. We have distributed 12,200 DM to the believers - victims of flood.

The Union of Baptists in Moldova, together with the victims of flood give you many thanks for your great help. ●

“What will be eaten tomorrow is prepared the day before”



let the fields be jubilant

The weevils nearly had it

In Albania, BMS agriculturalist Glyn Jones reported successful trials of sweet-corn, pop-corn and peanuts last year. His collaborators will be moving into larger scale production this year.

They are all essentially new crops to Albania. The maize trials showed that they still cannot recommend a good maize variety for growing on non-irrigated land in Albania.

He received a lot of interesting feed-back from farmers following the distribution of vegetable seed given by the "Friends of Albania".

Glyn was instrumental in saving the entire national collection of wheat and maize varieties from destruction by weevils which were attacking the fresh seed as soon as it entered the stores. The University in Tirana, the capital, lacked money to get the stores and laboratories fumigated so Glyn arranged for it to be done.

He'd previously persuaded the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to store the seed of the native varieties at low temperatures for many years (in Albania seed has to be regenerated every second year) so that the valuable collection would not be lost in future, but such storage needs good quality, freshly harvested seed. At one stage it looked as though the weevils were going to get all the seed before USDA did.

The plans for future agricultural work make progress *javash, javash* (step by step), in true Albanian fashion.

The EBF's Albania Committee have approved proposals for: a project developed from the study the EBF made of the Mountain village of Shkrete; a "package" project for farmers; a project to give internationally recognised vocational qualifications for agricultural training in Albania; a project to give practical training for farmers.

The Baptist Men's Movement *Operation Agri* have agreed to fund the "package" project. A Scots Baptist, George Baird, will be involved with the last two projects. ●



Glyn was instrumental in saving the entire national collection of wheat and maize varieties from destruction



BMS Workers

BMS workers and National Church leaders

ALBANIA

The European Baptist Federation
General Secretary:
Karl Heinz Walter

Chris and Maire Burnett
Glyn and Gill Jones
Ryder and Heather Rogers
David and Yvonne Wheeler
Prema Tennekoon
Paul and Elisabeth Towson
Saverio and Betsy Guarna

ANGOLA

The Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola.
General Secretary:
Alvaro Rodrigues

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh Baptist Sangha
General Secretary:
J A Singha

Valerie Hamilton
Sue Headlam
Christine Preston

BELGIUM

Union of Baptists in Belgium
President: Samuel Verhaeghe

Stuart and Joyce Filby

BRAZIL

Brazilian Baptist Convention
General Secretary:
Irland Pereira de Azevedo

David and Sheila Brown
Stuart and Georgie Christine
John and Norma Clark
Chris and Marion Collict
Roger and Angela Collinson
Peter and Susan Cousins
Roy and Margaret Deller
Tim and Rosimar Deller
Kevin and Linda Donaghy
John and Maria Dyer
Andy and Linda Eaves
Mike and Jean Gardiner
Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite
Mark and Suzana Greenwood

Martin and Kathy Hewitt
Keith and Barbara Hodges
David and Sue Jackson
Vincent and Sadie MacDougall
David and Catherine Meikle
Lee and Evelyn Messeder
Gerry and Johan Myhill
Mary Parsons
Colin and Marcia Pavitt
Stan and Maureen Porter
John and Lidia Pullin
Derek and Joanna Punchard
Margaret Swires
Michael and Daveen Wilson

BULGARIA

General Secretary:
Bozhidar Igoff

CROATIA

Baptist Union of Croatia
President: Dr Branco Lovric

EL SALVADOR

El Salvador Baptist Association
President: Luis Sandoval

David and Rachel Quinney
Mee

FRANCE

The Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches
Executive Secretary:
Jean Pierre Dassonville

Neil and Ruth Abbott
Robert and Catherine Atkins
Philip and Rosemary Halliday
Chris and Christine Spencer
Ian and Pauline Thomas
John and Sue Wilson

HUNGARY

International Baptist Lay Academy

INDIA

Church of North India
General Secretary:
Noel Sen
Baptist Union of North India
Secretary:
J H Masih
Bengal Baptist Union
Secretary:
S K Biswas

Baptist Church of Mizoram
General Secretary:
Raltawnga

Ann Bothamley
Betty Marsh
Sheila Samuels
Carole Whitmee

INDONESIA

Convention of Indonesia
Baptist Churches
President:
Youtie Legoh

ITALY

Baptist Evangelical Union of Italy
President: Renato Maiocchi

David and Ann MacFarlane
Chris and Sarah Mattock
Mark and Claire Ord

JAMAICA

Jamaica Baptist Union
General Secretary:
Trevor Edwards

NEPAL

United Mission to Nepal
Executive Director:
Ed Metzler
International Nepal Fellowship
Director: John Bradley

Jane Andrews
Graham and Debbie Atkinson
Jerry and Ruth Clewett
Colin and Denise Clark
Robert and Ruth Ellett
Margaret Gibbs
Iain and Karen Gordon
Peter and Valerie Harwood
Tim Lehane and Alison MacLean
Sheila Loader
Andrew and Linda Mason
David and Catherine McLellan
Jenny Dorman
Grace Penney
David Payne
Katie Norris
Joy Ransom
Ian and Sally Smith
Isobel Strang
Paul and Jackie Wicks
Corinna Woods
Sue Frame
Chris and Alison Rudall

NICARAGUA

Nicaragua Baptist Convention
Executive Secretary:
Elias Gonzalez Arguello

Peter and Sheila Brewer

POLAND

Baptist Union of Poland
President:
Konstanty Wiazowski

PORTUGAL

The Portuguese Baptist Convention
General Secretary:
José de Sousa

SOUTH AFRICA

Baptist Convention of South Africa
General Secretary:
Desmond Hoffmeister

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya
General Secretary:
Mr Nihal

George and Betsy Lee
Joy Knapman

THAILAND

Thailand Baptist Missionary Fellowship
General Secretary:
Marshall Peters
The Church of Christ in Thailand
General Secretary:
Sint Kimhachandra
Karen Baptist Convention
General Secretary:
Sunny Danpongpee
Lahu Baptist Churches
Suwit Damrongpong

Geoff and Chris Bland
Jacqui Wells
Angus and Carol MacNeill

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

General Secretary:
Anslem Warrick
TUNISIA
C/O Baptist Union of Sweden
Chairman:
Per-Ake Wahlstrom

ZAIRE

Baptist Community of the River Zaire
President:
Koli Mandole Molima

Stephen and Elizabeth Allford
Margot Bafende
Owen and Deanna Clark
Janet Claxton
Brenda Earl
Gwen Hunter
John and Rena Mellor
Pat Woolhouse

ZIMBABWE

The National Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe
President:
Patrick Face Moyo

Steve and Pam Seymour

SECONDMENTS

Cameroon:
Andrew and Jenny Wilson with EBM

Central African Republic:
Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins with the CBM

Guinea Conakry:
Mark and Andrea Hotchkin with TLM

Mozambique:
Suzanne Roberts with ACRIS

Niger:
Alan and Ruth Wood with SIM

Sierra Leone:
Helen Johnston with EBM

MISSIONARIES SERVING IN THE UK

Sue Wilson
David and Elidia Grainger
John and Nan Passmore
Suzanne Linnell

Not listed are a number of missionaries who have taken leave of absence

Candidates

Angola
Simon Collins



Brazil
John and Lesley Moody



Nepal
Andrew and Michelle Furber



Nepal
Tim and Caroline Trimble



Nepal
Paul and Hilary Drinkwater



Albania
Roger and Nicola Pearce



French speaking Europe
Wayne and Wendy Hadley



Albania
Saverio and Betsy Guarna



Albania
Paul and Elizabeth Towlson



RE-OFFER OF SERVICE
Sri Lanka
Peter and Margaret Goodall



Nepal
Glyn and Frankie Phillips



Candidates accepted in
1994/95

Countries where BMS has partnership agreements and where missionaries are serving.

86

Angola
Bangladesh
Brazil
India
Jamaica
Nepal
Sri Lanka
Trinidad
Zaire

87

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

88

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

89

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

90

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

91

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

92

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

93

Albania
Angola
Bangladesh
Belgium
Brazil
Bulgaria
Cameroon
CAR*
El Salvador
France
Guinea
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Italy
Jamaica
Mozambique
Nepal
Nicaragua
Niger
Portugal
Sierra Leone
Sri Lanka
Tanzania
Thailand
Trinidad
Zaire
Zimbabwe

94

Albania
Angola
Bangladesh
Belgium
Brazil
Bulgaria
Cameroon
CAR*
El Salvador
France
Guinea
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Italy
Jamaica
Mozambique
Nepal
Nicaragua
Niger
Portugal
Sierra Leone
Sri Lanka
Tanzania
Thailand
Trinidad
Zaire
Zimbabwe

95

Albania
Angola
Bangladesh
Belgium
Brazil
Bulgaria
CAR*
Croatia
El Salvador
France
Guinea
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Italy
Jamaica
Mozambique
Nepal
Nicaragua
Poland
Portugal
Sri Lanka
South Africa
Thailand
Trinidad
Tunisia
Zaire
Zimbabwe

* CAR-Central African Republic

Another new song

Not another new song! It's too much, too difficult, too tiresome singing fresh songs all the time.

Surely it is right for God's people to sing the everlasting song, to proclaim every day the Good News that he has saved us? It is right to sing the praise of God's eternal saving grace. In our singing we recognise the greatness of our Lord. Our souls are restored as we sing "Amazing Grace" and relive the experience of the way in which God has found us and dealt with us. We are strengthened as we say again, "Tell me the old old story". For most of us it is humbling and uplifting to recall the greatness of the gospel message that has reached us and our communities.

We cannot forget the nature of God as we sing his praises. He is ever-living and ever progressive, always surprising us with the joy of compassionate and fulfilling activity, always doing the new thing. When we sing, "New every morning is the love ..." we are expressing what is genuine about the gracious way God deals with humankind and with all creation. His role is not passive and his activity is not past, there is a newness about the wonders of grace.

So the challenge is to sing a new song, to have honest, fresh expressions of praise and thanks because God is not merely repeating the past, even though we have a testimony of the way God has always been working within history. The Lord of all is still involved within the events of history today and will be for all the tomorrows that are granted.

A new song then, and a new obedience. Just as our Lord is creative and dynamic, so should be our response. The fulfilment of God's kingly rule, acknowledged within all creation, has yet to be seen. His justice and fairness has yet to be experienced by humankind in all its fullness. The glori-

ous praising by all sections of creation - seas and fields and trees of the wood - is still beyond our horizons, lost from view in the smoke from our spoiling of life and of creation.

God is still accomplishing so much to fulfil these ends!

What then of our new ways of obedience in response? The BMS needs to find new patterns of working. Mission theologian, David Bosch, said, "In the light of a fundamentally new situation and precisely so as to remain faithful to the true nature of mission - mission must be understood and be undertaken in an imaginatively new manner today."

God's involvement with us and our involvement with God's people will be in various and new ways and some of them extremely uncomfortable. It may seem, as we plan and formulate a strategy, that we are denying a day by day response to the guidance of God. Yet our new songs of obedience will not be composed by us, they will emerge as we discover the way God, by his Spirit, is guiding and prompting us. As we look around the world there is no doubt that the Spirit is leading God's people into new ways, into fresh paradigms of mission.

We are privileged to face the challenge of this newness and to offer a commitment that is allied to the ever fresh tasks of the Gospel given to us by our ever-living and working God. ●

*Let the
Earth
Sing*



Let the Earth Sing

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

PO Box 49 Baptist House 129 Broadway Didcot Oxon OX11 8XA
BMS is a registered charity 6/95

