

MISSIONARY **HERALD**  
*mb.*

November/December 1995

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**God with us ...**  
At the sharp end of mission

**Zimbabwe Action**  
Out of Africa with 28:19





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# editorial

## **mh. Missionary Herald**

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**COVER PHOTO**  
The young face of  
mission in Thailand

A five year old came home from school and announced that she'd been chosen to play Mary in the school's nativity play. "Who's going to be Joseph?" her mother asked.

"How do you know about Joseph?" was the child's immediate and indignant reply.

Can we remember a time when the story of our Lord's birth was that new, when we were surprised anyone else knew about it? Can we recapture that startling time when we realised this was not just a pretty story only suitable for children to act out amongst the tinsel, Christmas trees and reindeer, but rather the earth-shaking account of the way God slipped into this world via a straw-filled shed?

Maybe those of us in the more developed regions of this planet have lost the ability to feel with our senses into the Christmas story. What relevance, beautiful though it is, has this story of a baby born into poverty for our relatively affluent lives?

Perhaps we must look at the nativity through the eyes of our sisters and brothers in other countries. In Zaire and Angola this Christmas grown adults will be acting out the story. The birth will be depicted noisily and painfully by those who know what it means to be born, to live and to die in poverty. Those supervising the census will be portrayed by those who suffer from oppressive officialdom every day. When Herod's soldiers enter the scene they will be shown as clowns to be laughed at by those who are forever fearful of the military around them.

A baby born into this kind of world they can understand because it is their world. God entering into this world in Jesus to turn it upside down, to change it and save it is good news they are eager to hear and accept.

But their world is our world too. Let's open our eyes and see again what our missionary God has started by coming as a child to live and die with and for each human being. ●

# Zimbabwe Zim

As the 1995-96 Action Teams settle into their assignments, the 1994-95 team to Zimbabwe look beyond the safaris and tourist spots to a side of life not normally experienced by visitors. Reporting: Graham Everitt, Eleanor Fernyhough, Marc Richards, Marianne Young.

**A**frica's paradise: the majestic beauty of Victoria Falls, the thrill of a close encounter on safari and whirling tribal dancers silhouetted in firelight. These are some of the romantic images of Zimbabwe that the average tourist would dream of before venturing into the "dark continent".

In contrast, we are all familiar with the emotive news reports from Africa: famine, drought, war, sickness, death. For many people that is all they do see. For us, however, we had the unrivalled privilege of going behind the scenes, meeting the real people and living their real lives for six months.

To say that every moment was idyllic would not be true. We got to see all sides of life in Zimbabwe from the heights of luxury in affluent Harare to the prostitution and homeless drunkenness in the areas the visitors never see.

We knew that we were not out there for an easy time or a holiday, but there were a few times when our western minds were shocked by the things we saw. Thirteen children huddled miserably under a table while their mother tearfully explained how the father had not been seen for several months. They will lose their

home soon and then what? All we had to offer were words of encouragement. As we walked out of the house, safe in the knowledge that we would eat tonight, we all offered up our own silent prayers.

Many of the houses we visited were a single room, overcrowded and dark. It was these people who opened their lives and hearts to us, giving us food and, more importantly, friendship. The love that we received was overwhelming and the friends that we made will hopefully last a lifetime.

Along with the romantic images of Africa is the picture of beautiful chocolate-brown children with huge white smiles. It was those same children who first introduced us to something we were to experience a lot of throughout those six months: the issue of our skin colour.

Those huge white smiles vanished as astonished stares took their place followed by one of two reactions. Terrified screams and tears as these strange white creatures (us) passed by, or pure fascination and the thrill of the chase they would follow us en masse down the road chanting "Khiwa" or "Murungu" (white person) - titles we were to get used to. Although this was sometimes irritat-

ing and an interruption to our work, we knew they were only children so we grinned and bore it cheerfully.

We laughed off the stroking and hair pulling, we shook thousands of little hands and apologised at the petrified cries. With gentle encouragement and Polo mints we broke through most of the confusion and made many young friends.

What we didn't expect was some of the prejudice we experienced from adults as well. The church members were open minded and accommodating to our western culture, but we had to go into the real world at times!

The common Zimbabwean mentality and, we were reliably informed, a lot of Africa in general, see all white people as rich. There is also the added problem for females of what we christened the "Sharon Stone Syndrome". The only real contact that many Zimbabweans have with whites is through films and so their view of white girls follows the behaviour of those film stars and we ended up with the reputation of being loose! This caused many uncomfortable situations. Wild proposals in the street, brazen propositions from taxi drivers and frequent suggestive glances and comments often characterised our

**Right:** Tourist-eye view of Victoria Falls  
**Inset:** Plugged into Western culture - twins Shepherd and Shelton Nkokha

# babwe

shopping trips or stained otherwise peaceful days.

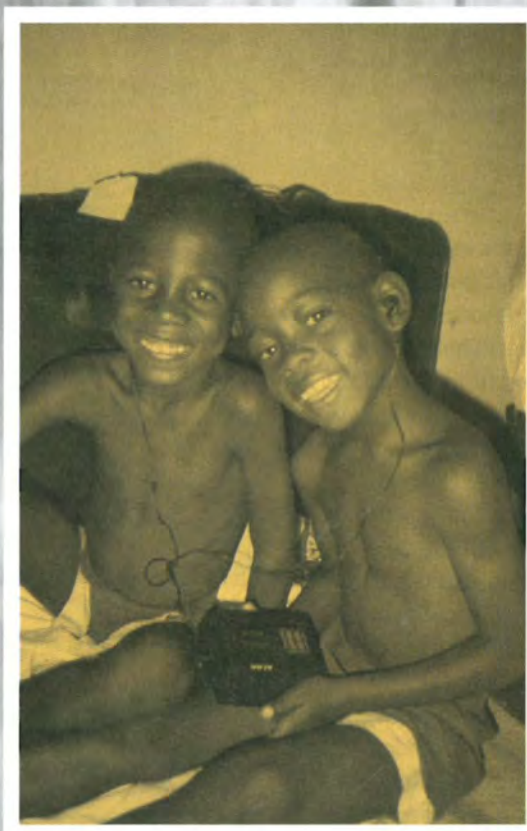
One particular incident actually required police intervention!

Waiting for a bus at the hustling bus rank in Gweru, we thought we would be safe even without the body-guard-style protection we were usually provided with. Maybe leaving two white girls alone was not the best idea ever, but there was no other option because of their other engagements. Surely people at a bus stop would be too busy with their own affairs but apparently not.

Within a very short period we found ourselves engulfed by ardent admirers asking questions, begging money and declaring amorous intentions! Unsure of how to react or what move to make next, we laughed and tried to extract ourselves without causing any more disruption. Surrounded by over 30 people, unable to move, panic struck and our hearts began to speed... and then the police stepped in.

Being hauled out of the throng by two large uniformed men was embarrassing, but preferable to anything that could have lain in store for us,

**Continues on page 6**



## PROJECT 96

The challenges of church growth in Zimbabwe are being grasped daily. Where God's people take the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, they are acutely aware of the spiritual battles being fought. They are also aware that the victory is theirs in Jesus and enemy territory is being taken as lives are transformed from a superstitious belief in ancestral spirits to freedom in Christ.

From its launch next year, BMS Project 96 will challenge Christians in the UK to support our partnerships with Zimbabwe Baptist Churches in providing resources for church-planting, discipleship training, leadership development and entrepreneurial and business training. ●

had we not been rescued. The policemen escorted us to a bus amid amused cries from our rejected fan club and we left in one piece, our cool confidence shaken and our pockets \$50 lighter thanks to some light fingers.

Zimbabwean smiles are sunny and warm and attitudes are normally relaxed, beautiful people in a beautiful country. Amidst the rugged beauty and blazing colours, the laid-back attitude belies a history of pain and violence, racial splits and vicious tribalism.

Zimbabwe has gained the reputation of being a country divided. The two tribes of Zimbabwe: the Shona and the Ndebele have a checkered past. The government is now making many moves towards complete unity. Appearances may be smooth, but whether hearts will heal, only time will tell. Many people we spoke to about the 15 year old independence of Zimbabwe said that there were many aspects of the old regime that were

good, but the country moves on well in its own strength now.

For the past five years the country has suffered a severe drought. As each rainy season approaches hopes rise, but this year, as before, hopes faded and time passed without the expected and much-needed deluge. Despite the hardship of such a life the people rarely complain and have learned endurance and patience. There is a noticeable lack of materialism although this is changing as the west increasingly influences the culture. Often in homes where children may not be adequately clothed and fed, a TV and a stereo will have pride of place in the one-roomed house.

We loved the country, the people and the culture, yet it is so sad when

mere skin colour makes such a difference. The colour of skin opens or closes doors and affects attitudes. Where does this state of mind originate?

Apparently the original whites didn't want to mix with the blacks and so today the attitudes remain.

As Christians we know that God looks at our hearts. If only we could all do the same. ●

**The Zimbabwe Action Team** spent six months between November 1994 and April 1995 with churches in evangelism, youth work and church planting crusades. They shared their testimonies, led Bible studies, prayed for the sick and were involved in counselling, preaching and music ministries.



**Above: The Zimbabwe Action Team  
Left: The Action Team's kitchen**

# A festive dilemma



BMS missionary **Isobel Strang** recalls her introduction to a Nepali Christmas

The soft warm air, still a touch fresh after the cool night and morning mist reminded me of the unusual nature of this Christmas. This was Nepal and my first Christmas in my own flat.

I had a new church, new friends, worked in a new language, related in a new culture and now new Christian Christmas traditions. Though Christianity was still new to Nepal in those days, the church still had developed its own practices for the celebration. Celebration in Nepal is synonymous with feasting and so for the church an enormous feast for all.

I had decided to keep a quiet Christ centred morning before the bustle of five hours at church with the celebrations to Christ our Incarnate King. I read of the Servant King and expressed my concern to Him that I had not been permitted to get alongside the Nepali ladies in preparing the vegetables for the feast. Sent to serve but being served.

Yet it was not the climate, culture nor the curry that made this Christmas so different. Those factors contributed but the absence of the "And so it's Christmas" atmosphere in my mind was inevitably deepened by absence of family, familiar trim-



mings and trappings.

Much later, weary from church, the feast and festivities over I sought the warmth of the late afternoon sun. The gift wrappings lay freshly scrunched on the floor. I sighed; Christmas almost over for another year.

The voice I heard faintly. The broad smile, lank black hair and bandage-topped crutch were all starkly familiar as I opened the door to Carli Devi. But it is Christmas I thought. A holiday. I do not want to welcome this recovering lady into my home. She has virtually nothing. I have the scraps of abundance all over the floor. What do I do now? what

would my friend advise? What would my exemplary predecessor do? Lord, give me grace, wisdom, compassion, sense, everything - get me out of this mess?

The year previously I had sat with this dear lady as part of her treatment. There seemed to be no other comfortable way to get her straightened out. Now a new Christian having feasted obviously to excess at the church feast she came looking for a place to "sleep it off".

**What would you do?** She was stuffed. Could barely walk on her newly strengthened legs. Looked at me so pleadingly. Spoke so needfully. But the one

place she could sleep was strewn with paper, decorations and cards, chocolate and biscuits.

**What would Christ do?**

It is Christmas. Christ incarnate. Incarnate in his knowing this lady, her deepest of sorrows, her immediate needs. He said: "As you do to these, so you do to me."

**What should I do?**

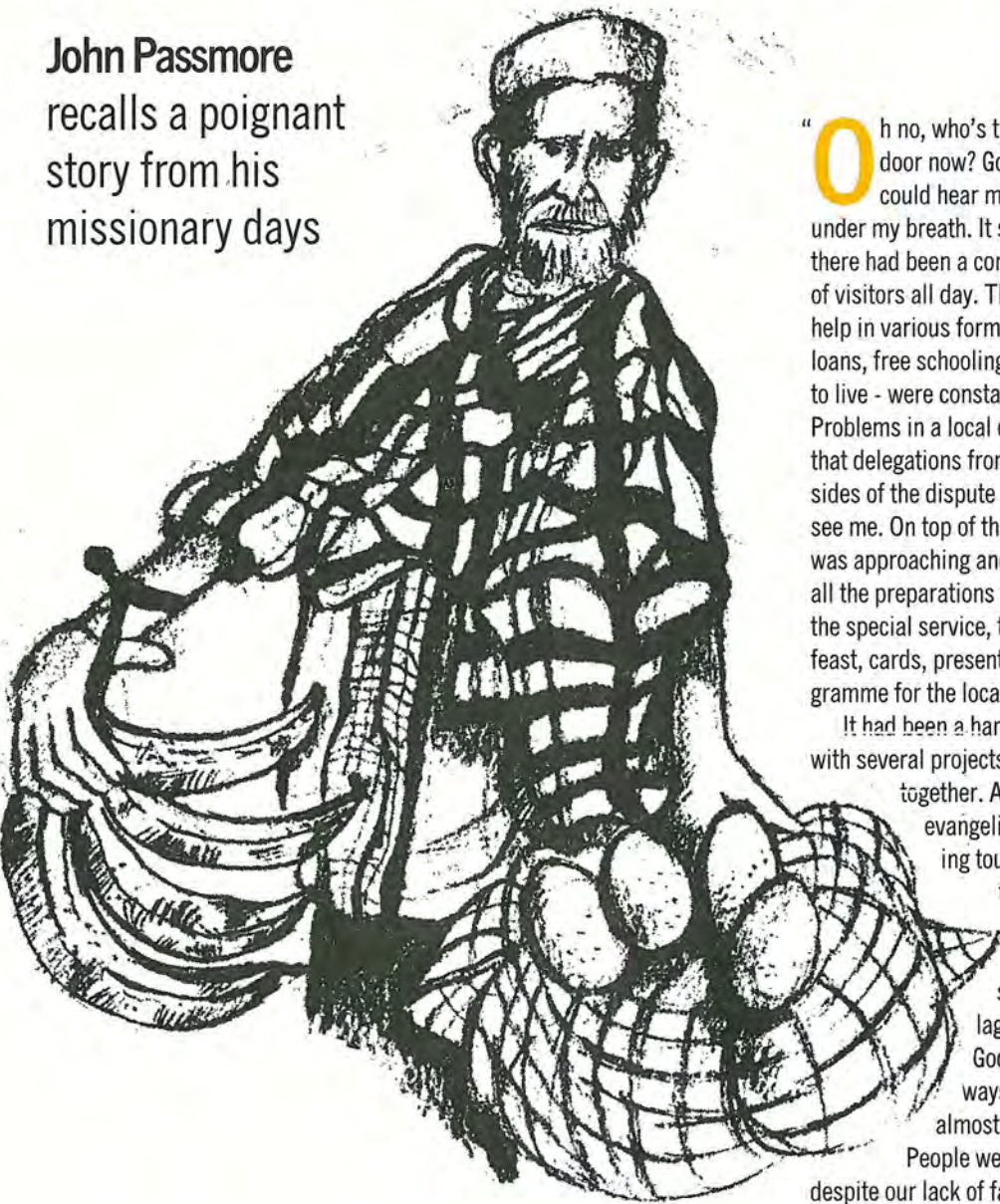
If I took her in and let her sleep here the questions were numerous. Would I be safe? Would she steal anything? Would this make her more demanding? Would she become more dependant on me?

Was it an answer to my prayer or one from my desire to get her away. I would go and get a taxi, bring it here and pick her up, take her to the bus park from where she could catch a bus to her village before they finished for the day, pay for her fare (as that was another reason as to her home's inaccessibility) and then I could continue on.

As I sat back in the taxi leaving her on her bus I 'phewed' and prayed again for wisdom and compassion as I made my way to a hospital to share Christ Incarnate with a paralysed boy and his faithful mother. They, too, were new believers in the Incarnate King but had not been able to celebrate their first Christmas at all. ●

# Easier to give than to re

John Passmore  
recalls a poignant  
story from his  
missionary days



“Oh no, who’s that at the door now? Go away!” I could hear myself saying under my breath. It seemed as if there had been a constant stream of visitors all day. Those wanting help in various forms - clothes, loans, free schooling, somewhere to live - were constant callers. Problems in a local church meant that delegations from opposite sides of the dispute had been to see me. On top of that Christmas was approaching and there were all the preparations to be made; the special service, the church feast, cards, presents, the programme for the local radio.

It had been a hard few months with several projects all coming together. An extensive evangelistic preaching tour with visitation and services in many of the scattered villages had seen God at work in ways we had almost forgotten.

People were healed, despite our lack of faith. Some experienced the forgiveness of sins and received new life in Jesus. Others were brought to a

deeper commitment to Jesus and expressed a desire to know more of His will in their lives.

Alongside this, three of the housing colonies were nearing completion and the first families had moved in. A change in government and the resulting tidying up process introduced by the military administration had bulldozed flat all the shacks and hovels alongside roads and railway lines. The place certainly looked cleaner, but thousands had been turned out from what was to them ‘home’. Now they had nowhere and nothing. The church’s response had been to buy plots of low lying land on the edges of the town which were cheaper than prime development land, but near to the industries which had first attracted these people into the town and away from their farms.

Ponds were dug and the surrounding land raised with the excavated earth. Residents’ committees were formed and plots allocated to needy Christian families. Some help was given to buy materials for the dwelling.

What had been created was not paradise by any means, but a place of relative security and worked out Christian community. It had been hard in terms of time,



# ceive

money and nervous energy. Now I was ready to relax - but for that doorbell!

On my way along the hall, I recognised the shape of the person huddled in the porch. This wasn't his first visit, nor, I thought with irritation, would it be his last. My mind flashed back to our first meeting . . .

He'd come to church one Sunday morning and spoken to me after the service. Like so many others, he'd left his few meagre fields to make his fortune in the town. He and his four brothers inherited less than an acre each of their family lands. His share was now mortgaged to the local money lender. He cultivated the land of the harvested crop but bore none of the cost of seed, fertilizer or cultivation.

What a sorry specimen he was. I'd heard the story so often but there was something about this man. His drawn face had a quality which told me he wasn't about to give up. His tattered clothes were worn with a dignity not usually found in the squalor of the open drain beside which he lived. We had talked but then had come the inevitable - he wanted a loan - just until his first pay packet came.

I gave it to him and he repaid the loan that first time. But then the family came to join him. There were school fees, doctors' bills, clothes for the children, food and rent! Yes, he actually had to pay rent for his two yards of open sewer.

I had decided several times that this would be the last loan but how could I live in this comfort or sit down to the meal I could smell in the advanced stages of preparation and turn this poor creature away? What would it be this time? He now had a plot in one of the housing colonies so there was no rent. I'd given him extra money so that he could construct a reasonable home for his family. I'd even fixed up a job for his wife so that there was more money coming in.

Opening the door, I was just about to enquire what I could do for him this time, when he held out both hands. In one there was large bunch of at least two dozen bananas. And in the other a grubby, knotted cloth containing four eggs.

"These are for you. They're the first bananas from the tree we planted. With my wife's first month's wages we bought a chicken and it has just started

laying. The eggs are for your children."

"My children don't need eggs and bananas," I replied. "They have enough. Your children need them. They are always hungry and the eggs would be good for them. You could sell some of the bananas to buy rice or flour. You bring these here today and will be back tomorrow asking for another loan. Take them home or to the market."

He didn't go. And the hands stayed outstretched. A shadow came across his still drawn face and tears formed in those cloudy eyes.

"Yes, you helped me and yes my children are hungry. I've not got any present for them at Christmas, nor any money, but it is because you helped us so much that I'm here. Are you the only one who can give? Must we always only receive? Please, we want to say thank you. It's not much but please take these things".

I didn't know what to say; I couldn't have said it anyway. I stood clutching the eggs and bananas and watched him move slowly out of the courtyard.

Going indoors, I began to think about the way I'd complained so often about missionaries and missions and their attitudes to "poor" national Christians. How they seemed to take great pleasure in giving, grudgingly, and only giving. Haven't we got anything to give in return? And when we do try to give, why are they so reluctant to receive? ●

**John Passmore** is the BMS Europe representative and served in Bangladesh (1977-1987). Based on a story by Mr Michael Sushaladhikari, President of Bangladesh Baptist, Sangha.

## BREAKING CHAINS

Once the Albanian people were in bondage to communism - cut off from the outside world.

NOT free to have democracy.  
NOT free to travel.  
NOT free to speak their minds.  
NOT free to believe . . .

Today, following the collapse of the oppressive regime, the people are breaking their chains of bondage.

*Breaking Chains*, the BMS Project 95, aims to raise £35,000 to resource evangelism and church planting in a nation which is hungry for God's word and which is seeing phenomenal growth in Christianity. BMS missionaries are among those taking the good news of salvation in Jesus to the Albanians, seeing the church grow, discipling new Christians and training leaders.

YOU can be involved in this exciting breakthrough. A resource booklet, bookmark and poster are available free and you can borrow a video or slide set to set your church, prayer group or housegroup going. All we ask is a contribution to post and packing. Telephone Christine Neilson at BMS, on (01235) 512077.

*Now we are free  
We are free to love  
and serve the Lord  
Jesus who died for  
us and is our Saviour*

# God with Us

**Bob Ellett** tells the moving story of how the love and acceptance of Jesus transformed the lives of a family who were considered ritually unclean.

**T**he Nepali night was just giving way to the first grey of morning. Rattle rattle rattle; an urgent knocking at our veranda door. I climbed out of bed and rubbed the sleep from my eyes and groped my way to the door. Two hours to go to breakfast.

At the door was Sitaram and his little girl. He looked very worried; the little girl looked very serious. She must have been only about five or six and she was so clean she looked as though she had been polished from shining hair to the tips of her toes. She clung tightly to Sitaram's hand.

"Good morning, Sitaram. Come in and sit down".

They sat down on the veranda bench. The little girl took fright at the bearded missionary standing before her and buried her head in Sitaram's waistcoat.

"I am sorry I kept you so long. What is the trouble?"

"It's our little girl. Can your wife help?"

"I am sure she will try,"

Rapidly waking, I returned to the bedroom.

"Who was it?"

"It's our friend Sitaram and the little girl."

"What? 'The' little girl?"

"Yes, 'the' little girl."

One of the abilities that Ruth has is to get up from a near coma and appear fresh and bright and dressed in a few minutes.



**Above:** Smiles from leprosy patients who found acceptance in Jesus  
**Right:** Ruth Ellett with two pastors' wives to whom she teaches English



“Sitaram, what is the problem?”

“It’s Jyoti. She is sick, she won’t eat and her blood is thin. Can you help?”

Arrangements were made to get Jyoti to a doctor. When they had gone - Jyoti still clutching Sitaram’s hand tightly - I was told the full story.

In the beginning, Jyoti’s real parents were blind and begged for a living. They had no home and slept rough. Eventually, as the little girl grew, they found they could not feed her. Finally, they abandoned her in the open air market in the town of Butwal. Her name was Juti then which means ‘dirty, unclean, contaminating’. Juti was alone, dirty, in nothing but rags and shunned and driven out by everybody.

Juti was found in the market by Sitaram and his wife. They, too, are considered unclean. Sitaram has had leprosy and it has left its scars in his body and in the way that society treats him. Because in Hindu eyes he is ritually unclean, they say he pollutes everything. If he buys tea at a tea-shop, he must wash his own glass. No one may give him employment without making themselves polluted. All that is left for such in Hinduism is to beg.

But Sitaram and his wife are now Christian. In Jesus they have found love and acceptance and hope. In spite of badly maimed hands, he has learned to carve wood beautifully and it has been our privilege with other missionaries to help him set up the local marketing so that his work now supports his family for some months of the year. They have a deep faith and have been praying for a daughter as a sister for their one son. As Sitaram’s wife explained to the church with eyes filled with tears of joy, God has heard their prayer and given them Jyoti.

In adopting a little girl, they have accepted an enormous cost not just to feed and educate her but one day to

pay for the dowry when she gets married. Juti is already loved but they could not leave her name as ‘dirty’ so they have changed it from Juti to Jyoti; from a child of the dirt to child of light. ●

**Bob and Ruth Ellett** are BMS missionaries in Butwal, Nepal. Bob is an engineer and both are involved in encouraging local Christians in a variety of projects.

### PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for this family and others like them
- Pray for the other “Juti” of Nepal

#### To think about:

- How can we see God working through the lives of people in these events?
- How can God use you to bring life and hope to others?
- Sitaram and his family face an enormous cost for Jyoti, how much commitment would be too much for you? In the light of that, what was the limit of God’s commitment to us?



# Mb. in colour!

**T**here's a fresh look to the Missionary Herald for 1996. For the first time in its history, Britain's best selling mission magazine will feature colour inside in every issue.

And we're giving the content a boost — building on the strengths of the past and adding to your usual features. Every month *mb.* will focus on a major mission issue or topic, bring into profile people whose lives have made an impact on building God's kingdom and update you on stories from past issues, providing prayer points throughout the magazine.

Every month, we'll bring you news from the 28:19 Action Teams, who spend six months abroad at the sharp end of mission. The BMS young people's Action Teams provide a vital way for the next generation to share the good news of salvation in Jesus with the world.

And every month we'll focus on one of the 22 countries with which the BMS has active mission partnerships, bringing you up-to-date statistics, news and stories . . . and hopefully a touch of humour.

In the 1996 *mb.* we plan to bring you regular columns, hoping to add to our regular contributors TV presenter and Baptist Minister Steve Chalke, former Bangladesh missionary John Passmore, BMS Europe Representative, and *mb.* Consulting Editor David Pountain.

News will play a major part in the 1996 *mb.* We'll keep you informed about mission events in UK churches through a new-look World Mission Link page; if people in your church have done something to support world mission, write to *mb.* with a photograph, if possible.

Also in your revitalised WML page will be a national diary, includ-

ing events, meetings and special presentations by Baptist churches and associations with a mission flavour.

And you'll be able to glean ideas from the World Mission Link "Agony" column in which we'll try to answer your WML questions.

Foreign news will continue to focus on events around the world which have a bearing on world mission and, particularly, on BMS activities worldwide.

New next year will be a missionary news digest specially compiled to update readers on missionaries' activities and to provide essential points for prayer.

The expansion of *mb.* is designed to give you more information, a greater reading choice and, above all, to provide you with more points for prayer — so that you can share fully in the BMS work of making Jesus known worldwide. ●

## World Mission Link

### Banners for world mission!

Viewfield Baptist Church, Dunfermline had an idea which involved young and old. The children were asked to take part in a Design a Banner competition. The theme was World Mission and the winning designs were then made into banners by the church banner making group.

Congratulations to the winners Stephen Dewar, Megan Corbett, Alison Stewart and Amy Simpson. The banners they designed are now displayed in the church and it is hoped that soon they will be

going to countries where the church has missionary contacts.

Pictured, from left to right, Stephen Dewar, Megan Corbett, Alison Stewart and Amy Simpson.

### Planning for world mission

What is your church doing in 1996? If you are planning an event, having a series of mission Bible studies, organising something for children, holding a prayer event, or a mission evening, World Mission Link can provide you with resources.

Speakers for meetings, ideas for things you can do, displays you can borrow, audio-visual pro-

grammes - they are all in the BMS Resources catalogue.

Contact your BMS Co-ordinator and discuss your needs. It's never too early to start planning.

**Keeping in touch:** Like Viewfield Baptist Church, news and pictures of mission activities

in your church are of great importance and interest. Send your news and photographs to The Editor, Missionary Herald, PO Box 49, Baptist House, Didcot, OX11 8XA. You can fax us on 01235 511265 or E-mail us on 100626,1577 @ Compuserve.com



# WOW!

Window on the World

World mission club



**NEW!**  
magazine!

Starting January 1996



Welcome to WOW! The exciting new world mission club for children. WOW opens up a 'Window on the World', and is a great way for children to learn more about the special world mission God's given us.

As a member of WOW club each child gets:

- Full colour bi monthly magazine
- large colour world map
- 24 great stickers to collect
- A Summer action day out
- Fantastic prizes to be won

And your Church gets a WOW Action Pack full of things to do. There's also a WOW project especially for children.

It costs just £2 for the year to receive WOW magazine, and you get all the rest free! It's too good to miss, so why not get your children's group to join today!

For further details see your magazine secretary, or contact:

'WOW CLUB', BMS PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon OX11 8XA  
Tel: 01235 512077



# Update

## Bangladesh

Tracy Roslyn with Deka Bangladesh BMS project news from around the UK

I have never known a sponsorship project capture the children's enthusiasm as this did!" This is one comment made about the 1995 BMS Children's Project Deka Bangladesh. All over the country, thousands of children have been fired with enthusiasm for the project with the result that the target of £4,000 has been surpassed!

Deka Bangladesh is supporting the work at the School for the Blind in Dhaka, to which BMS makes an annual grant. Founded in 1968 it was the first school to admit blind or partially sighted girls and now teaches around 100 students. As well as teaching practical skills the school prints Braille books which are distributed amongst the blind in Bangladesh.

This is how just some British children got involved.

The children at West Bridgford BC, Nottingham, spent an evening playing games and tasting snacks blindfold, as well as drawing and writing poems. They then undertook a sponsored spell using words connect-

ed with the project and raised £155.50.

"Our church recently held a Family Fun Day organised by the Sunday School in aid of this year's BMS Children's Project. This involved a variety of activities including games, stalls, 'Splattling a Deacon', face painting and the like. A good time was had by all and we were able to raise £215.00 in the process." (Penrallt BC, Bangor)

The Brownies from West Green Baptist Church, London, performed the story of the Hare and the Tortoise at the coffee evening when they raised £100 for the project. **They are pictured opposite, top.**

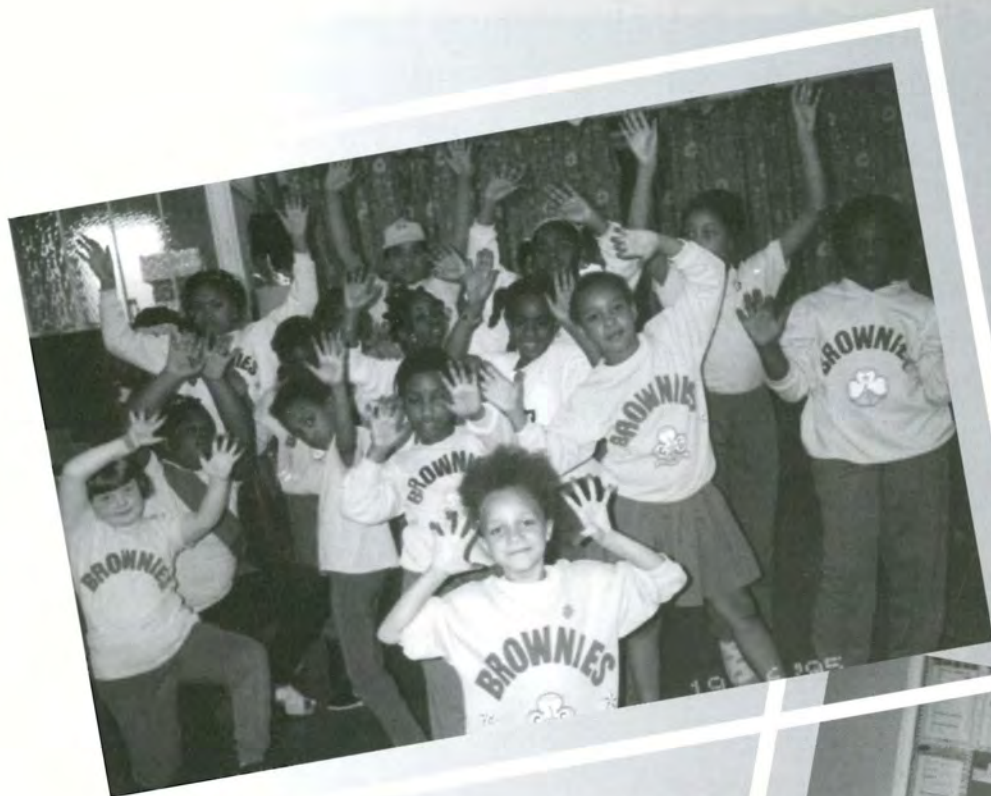
At a college for the blind in Worcester which has a sensory maze created by the TV programme 'Challenge Anneka', the children from Red Hill Baptist Church decided to try to get around blindfolded and get sponsored in the process. "A number of blind students joined in and we had great fun being with them. We raised £284 in total and

gave £84 towards the college's lap top scheme, the remainder for the school in Dhaka."

Junior Covenantors at Chipping Sodbury BC, who raised £304.44: "The money has been raised through sponsorship events: swimming as many lengths as possible in a given time; for those who could not swim, going without food for a time; and for some just being silent for a period of time. None of these were easy for a group of children of this age!"

The members of Ducklington Baptist Junior Church put on an evening of singing and drama. **Pictured opposite, bottom,** one of the girls performs the Lord's Prayer at bed time with offstage 'divine' challenge which gave much pause for thought. (£63)

"The children set themselves the target of £50. They quickly exceeded that and went on to set new targets of £100 and then £150. In the years that I have been involved with the school I have never known a sponsorship project capture the children's enthusiasm



as this did." (£178, Upton Vale BC, Torquay)

The Junior Section of Clarence Park Boys' Brigade (pictured, centre) held a coffee morning and set themselves a target of £75. By the end of the morning they had raised £140!

**Other fundraising events included:**

- Sponsored 'litter collect' by Latchford Crusaders, Warrington (£35)
- Disco and fashion parade by the Girls' Brigade at Welling BC (£50)
- Garage sale by Winesham Baptist Sunday School, Suffolk (£50)
- Saturday morning car wash and 'friendship bracelets' by children and young people at Yardley BC, Birmingham (£150), as well as selling tea, coffee and cakes, playing musical instruments, knitting articles for sale and collecting coins in Smartie tubes.

Deka Bangladesh runs until the end of December when a new children's project will be launched for January 1996. ●



Remember Shkrete? Events took a strange turn in the mountain village where Baptist Missionaries are working to take the gospel — and an enhanced quality of life. **Glyn Jones** reports.

# Mh Update

## A question of life...

**T**he little group of Baptists, mostly missionaries, had just arrived in a remote village in the mountains of Albania. They had come to deliver medicine and school materials from Christian well-wishers in England, and to give Andrew North, on a visit from BMS, Didcot, a chance to meet some of the villagers.

The journey had been tedious and harrowing, with our 13 year old Land Rover in low-ratio gears slithering along a muddy track cut into steep hillsides.

The road had been impassable during August, when it is normally open, due to unexpected rains, and it would soon be closed with the onset of the autumn rains. This had been our last chance and we were glad to get there. Our minds were full of good and positive things to say and do.

Almost immediately someone asked: "Did you know a boy died in the village six days ago?" I didn't, of

course. But the villager who asked the question knew that no Baptist missionary had been to the village for two months and death is no stranger to the people of the village, so I wondered why the question had been asked; there might be something unusual behind it.

"How did it happen?" I enquired. "Oh, two boys had a fight. Afterwards one went home, got a gun and killed the other." That shocked me: even in anarchy-ridden Albania such violence seems excessive.

"How old were the boys?" Again, the answer was surprising: the person killed had been 26, married, with a three-year-old daughter; the killer was 21 and had immediately run away.

The whole village was in shock, for many in the village would now be unwillingly drawn into a deadly conflict.

The 500-year-old Albanian Code of Lek Dukagjene, a medieval legal code of astonishing severity, still oper-

ates in the mountain villages of Albania where modern law and order are wanting and the Code prescribes the taking of a life for a life.

But there will not be an arrest and a trial, followed by an execution in the normal European manner. Here, the relatives of the victim are expected to take the murderer's life in return, or, if the murderer has fled, the life of one of his relatives.

In practice, this leads to a reciprocating vendetta between males (of all ages) of the two family lines, broken only after a formal reconciliation between the families or when all the males of the smaller family have been wiped out.

So, a kind of war now rages in the village of Shkrete, conducted according to the strict rules of tradition.

First, the men of one family are duty bound by their honour to kill a man or a male child of the other family; but the females are not to be harmed and the Code says males taking refuge in their own houses





cannot be killed there.

Then, after the revenge killing, it is the other family's turn for revenge. Consequently, the men of the family awaiting retribution are prisoners of their homes while the women of that family have to do all the work of the farm and go to market, as well as doing their normal work in the house.

Since many people in the village are linked by lines of descent to the murderer or to the victim, anxiety and fear of death will plague village life until the matter is resolved, one way or other.

We went to see the bereaved family, to pay our respects according to Albanian custom. As we entered the house, we saw an old widow cleaning the yard, dressed in black and with haggard, drawn features. It later turned out she was the 23 year old wife of the murdered man; she looked about 60. Her young life was blighted.

We sat in the customary funereal silence in the darkened upper living-room and sipped the strong, sweet

coffee which was offered to us.

There was little to say except that we were horrified and were very sorry at the turn of events.

We thought of their needs: for law and order, for liberation from the tyranny of fear, for young men who are less hot-blooded and can control their anger, for support for widows and fatherless children.

But most of all we thought of their great need of a saviour and a God-fearing life style.

Shkrete is a tough place anyway, the more so now, but it is one of the mountain villages in which we are committed to work to bring the gospel to a people who lack any religious experience.

On our way home from the village, we dropped in for an English cup of tea with some other Christian missionaries from England living in the town of Krujë, who also work in the mountain villages.

They asked us if we had heard of the murder of a young man three days

**Above left: Road to Shkrete creates a challenge for the BMS team**  
**Above: Shkrete welcoming committee**  
**Above right: Eager new readers of mb. in the mountain village**

ago in Mafseq, the nearest village to Shkrete.

We hadn't until then. But it seemed less shocking now, almost routine.

For 40 years, while practising its own brand of institutional violence, the communist rulers of Albania suppressed the traditional practices associated with the Code of Lek.

Murder is now on the increase. There have been hundreds, perhaps thousands, of murders since the demise of communism four years ago. Many are the result of "blood feuds".

It may be difficult for those living in Britain to appreciate that Albanian society is so unsettled. Pause to pray for the people of this troubled country, especially for the people of mountain villages such as Shkrete, and for the work of Christian missionaries among them. ●

**Glyn Jones**, A BMS Missionary and agricultural consultant, works with the European Baptist Federation in Tirana, Albania.

# Fairly Quiet

## At least, it was!

A last, quiet look at life in the Zairian Baptist compound at Kinshasa, by Owen Clark.

**T**he week before I left Kinshasa, a month or two back, was a fairly quiet one on the CBFZ compound – for me, at least. Deanna had gone on ahead, and I kept my head down. I had some written work to finish, the flat to leave shipshape for visitors, and my toothbrush and stuff to pack.

Inevitably there were a few interruptions from people wanting to say goodbye or make a last-minute request, but official farewells had already been said.

For Elisabeth Allford, next door, it was not so quiet. Steve was up-country fitting burglar bars to houses at Pimu, while she held the fort – and the phone.

It was just when the Ebola virus outbreak was hitting the news, and journalists from the *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph* and the *BBC* kept ringing to get the latest. Elisabeth was constantly in touch with medical contacts.

At the same time there was the hassle of trying to recuperate from Customs at the airport, the satellite communications equipment sent by

**Right:  
Quite  
quiet –  
The CBFZ  
compound  
in  
Kinshasa**



BMS, destined in the immediate to help the Ebola medical teams.

Ebola was a big story in the Western press. No-one was interested in the other diseases to which hundreds of people succumb each week – malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid and AIDS – nor those to which small children fall victim, like measles and diarrhoea. Apparently it's not these that sell newspapers, only Ebola, though they will still be with us long after Ebola has been forgotten.

One day Jean (as in French), the odd-job man, expressed concern that I was leaving. "How am I going to survive?" he asked.

"Perhaps you'll pick up a bit of work humping stuff around," I suggested, knowing that he had done this from time to time for people with sacks and bundles of produce to shift.

"There's no guarantee," he said, "and if I don't get work I don't eat."

"One thing I will do," I said, "is to match the amount you saved, as promised."

Although he had already withdrawn all that he had put by, I had said that I would give him an equivalent amount when I left. I totalled the amounts recorded on his brown envelope, converting them by month into hard currency at the old rates of exchange, and then back into zaïres at the current rate of exchange to conserve their value. It came to 76,000 new zaïres – not as impressive as it sounded, being worth about £12.

"What will you do with it?" I asked. "Where will you keep it? Is there anyone you can trust with it?"

I wondered, in fact, whether he would even get past the gendarmes down the road without losing it.

"Well", he said, looking doubtful, "there's a chap that I sometimes buy a cup of coffee from."

Although, in my estimation, this hardly ranked with the Bank of England for security, I handed over the bulky package with a sense of inadequacy to help him further and a silent prayer that he would be its main, if not its only, beneficiary. Time alone would tell.

Malela, our protocol chap, came back off leave in time to take me to the airport. He slept on a bit of sponge in the office, at his own insistence, cocooned in his sheet against the mosquitoes, for we had to leave before five in the morning.

I had finished my work, cleared up each room in turn, as my wife would have done, locking valuables in our own bedroom, and completed my packing. I felt that I was leaving things in order.

The alarm woke me in time to make a cup of tea and get ready to depart. Malela brought the protocol Land Rover round, and we loaded my bits of baggage without haste. As we drove through the streets of Kinshasa, still quiet this early, I congratulated myself on as smooth a departure as I could remember.

We were over halfway to the airport when it suddenly struck me. I had left my denture on the bathroom shelf – a fragment of a smile in a plastic pot. It was too late to turn back.

“Self-congratulation,” I mused, “is always a risky business.”

I would have to depend on the goodwill of colleagues in order to effect a reunion as quickly as possible. Sure enough a couple of weeks later I received a small package with a note from the Africa Secretary and a quotation from Ecclesiastes 12:3, about the grinders ceasing because they are few.

I’ll try to be more careful in future – about self-congratulation, I mean. ●

**Owen Clark** and his wife Deanna are BMS Missionaries in Kinshasa, Zaire.



### The BMS Prayer Guide — Order your copy now

Simply send a cheque or postal order for £1 (payable to the Baptist Missionary Society) PLUS your name and address on a sheet of paper, to:  
Christine Neilson, BMS, PO Box 49 Baptist House, Didcot, OX11 8XA.  
*(We will dispatch as soon as possible but please allow 14 days for delivery)*

## BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Baptist Missionary Society is seeking to appoint a

### General Director

The General Director will be an officer of the Society and the senior member of staff. The post is open to a woman or a man, lay or ordained, who, baptised as a believer, is a member in good standing of a Baptist Church, or a United Church of which Baptists are recognised partners.

#### The person appointed will be expected to have:

- A proven commitment to mission, and a willingness to see the BMS as the vehicle for this.
- The necessary theological ability to interpret the contemporary challenge of mission.
- An understanding of, and sympathy with, Baptist life and work in the United Kingdom.
- An openness to other cultures and the ability to relate to partner churches and bodies overseas.
- Leadership, management and administrative skills, to include the ability to work corporately and co-operatively.
- The ability, and readiness, to work with and through committees.
- The ability to communicate through public worship, in large and small gatherings and through the media.

Further details and job description from: Rev Chris Haig, Lancashire and Cheshire Association of Baptist Churches, Latchford Baptist Church, Loushers Lane, WARRINGTON, WA4 2RP Telephone: 01925 633929 to whom nominations and/or completed applications must be sent by

#### 15 December 1995

The BMS is actively involved in mission in over 30 countries and its work is supported by churches throughout England, Wales and Scotland.

Registered Charity Number 233782



Crowds gather for the conference rally in Luanda

## United call in Angola

Christians in Angola have taken a united stand in calling for change, against a background of a precarious peace process nationally.

For the first time in their history, the two organisations to which churches belong — the Council of Churches and the Association of Evangelicals — combined to promote a conference with the theme: *It's Time to Build*.

The 280 key church leaders and 70 guests — among them BMS Operations Director David Martin and Africa Representative Derek Rumbol — discussed and agreed a number of declarations which called on the government to fulfil its duties responsibly, speed the process of reconciliation and govern the country as it should.

The church is in a unique position to work for reconciliation; it reaches a variety of people across tribal, cultural and ideological differences, and it has recognised a duty to work for justice and peace, monitoring and denouncing abuses of human rights.

After the conference church leaders met with the Angolan Minister of Culture's religious affairs department to consider the resolutions.

Their meeting followed a week of lectures, debates, workshops, worship and plenary sessions at which key speakers included the Revds Ntoni Nzinga, an Angolan with the World Council of Churches, Soh Chye Ann, of the African Enterprise of South Africa, and Isaac Silvano, of TransWorld Radio.

The conference climax saw an estimated 20,000 at a rally in a football stadium in the capital, Luanda. The country's Council of Churches links 17 denominations and the Association of Evangelicals has 14 member bodies.

BMS is in partnership with the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (IEBA), funding projects in general church work, theological training and health centre work in Petroangola, Luanda and three in the north of the country. Next summer, following language training in Portugal, BMS missionary Simon Collins will head for Angola to work as a doctor in community health, based in Luanda, the first new BMS worker since 1991.

## Christians jailed in Nepal

Eleven Christians in Eastern Nepal are serving a two year jail sentence after being found guilty of disrupting the Hindu religion.

They contended they were not proselytising outside a temple, as charged, but were arrested when leaving a prayer meeting. Bibles, hymn books and musical instruments were confiscated and they spend a year in jail before their case came to court.

The group says it was framed by Hindus who lied to police but its spokesman, John Thapa, speaking from jail in Ilam, was anything but bitter. "We're rejoicing in the Lord," he told our correspondent, James East. "It says there will be persecution for the sake of his name. We realise this and are happy."

Nepal church leaders are keen that this district court judgment should not be seen as a precedent and are deriving some comfort from the fact that the judge imposed a two-year sentence instead of the six pressed for by the prosecution.

Hard-line Hindus view Christianity as a western import; in the past 35 years there have been some 200,000 converts. Church leaders are concerned that isolated Christian groups, particularly in rural and traditionally intolerant areas, may be targeted by Hindus and sympathetic police.

Under Nepal's 1990 constitution, the right to practise one's religion is protected but it states that "no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another".

Ed Metzler, Executive Director of the United Mission to Nepal —

with which BMS missionaries are serving — has asked human rights groups to investigate the case of the 11 Christians.

If there are no appeals and the 11 are of good behaviour, they could be released within six months, having served a year in jail already.

## Albanian seeds of hope

A Dutch agricultural consultancy, Agrinas, has been working with farmers in Albania to increase yields and harvest quality of potatoes and to share their faith with them.

The potato project, started last year in partnership with Youth With A Mission (YWAM), has seen more than 20 tons of high quality seed imported at a cost of more than £28,000.

Initially, the farmers — hardened by 40 years of communist rule under dictator Enver Hoxha — were suspicious of the Agrinas team, which arrived with potato seed, fertiliser, chemicals and tractors. But today more than 60 of the poorest farming families in Albania's Pogradec district are enjoying the benefits of a stronger harvest.

The team see the project as a long-term evangelistic strategy. Leader Joost Van Den Hee said: "People's hearts need to be prepared to receive the gospel in the same way that the soil must be prepared before planting seeds."

BMS has strong Baptist partnerships in Albania, including agricultural consultancy input at all levels by missionary Glyn Jones.

## Gospel at the carnival

The Notting Hill Carnival gave Christians from Westbourne Park Baptist Church, London, a mission field of more than a million people. They joined forces with the evangelistic organisation Viz-a-Viz to present the gospel through drama, puppetry and music as part of a project called One in a Million.

As well as performing arts, the team used the leaflet *The Party Never Stops* as an invitation to a Christian steel band concert at the church and as a gospel presentation. There was also a late night street party for revellers.

The Revd Dennis Pethers, of Viz-a-Viz, said: "The carnival is the biggest street festival in Europe and as such it's a unique evangelistic opportunity. Traditionally Christians have stayed away but it was great to see them right at the heart of it this year."

One in a Million, based at Westbourne Park Baptist Church, recruits volunteers of 18 and over. Information: Phil Hobern, 01277 215222.



Carnival street action, courtesy of Westbourne Park Baptist Church

## Cautious hope in Liberia

Baptist leaders in Liberia are cautious but hopeful that a cease-fire agreement, signed by rebel leader Charles Taylor and leaders of the nation in September, will open roads again so that they can visit Christians throughout the country.

During the five year war more than 100 Baptist churches have closed; in 1989 the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Education Convention had 253 member churches but last year only 54 were at its annual meeting.

Today, the convention's executive secretary, Emile Sam Peale, feels a sense of relief but is cautious — a feeling shared by churches in Liberia. "Now that the main players are directly involved, especially Charles Taylor, I feel more hopeful," he says. "When the roads are opened, that is a sign that we have moved forward."

This, he said, would enable visits to the Upper Nimba area where there had been no contact for more than five years.

Lasting peace, for Sam Peale, means disarming more than

60,000 people still holding arms but he is concerned that peace-keeping forces have only 8,000 soldiers to do this. But Baptists are, nevertheless, encouraged.

"Before the recent peace agreement, Baptists fasted and prayed for peace and spoke out against human rights abuses," says Sam Peale. "It doesn't make us popular but we must speak out."

## Changes to the team

Changes to the BMS national co-ordinators' team have seen the retirement of South and West's Leslie Gregory. Leslie, who operated from home at Salisbury, served nine Baptist associations.

Leslie, who pastored Baptist churches at Hastings, Battersea London, and Edenbridge from 1960 to 1983, joined the BMS in London before becoming its South and West representative in 1986.

Delyth Wyn Davies takes the co-ordinator's reins in Mid and North Wales. Delyth, who lives at Porthmadog, in Gwynedd, trained as a teacher at Bangor and taught music at primary school level from 1984 to 1987.

She felt the call to full-time Christian work and served the Presbyterian Church of Wales as a children's work organiser from 1988. Delyth, a member of Bethel Baptist Church, Penrhyndeudraeth, is a Sunday school teacher, worship leader and leader of a midweek children's club. She has also led children's activities within her association and been a speaker at a ministers' retreat.

## CHECK OUT

NOV/DEC 1995

### ARRIVALS

Jenny Dorman from Nepal  
David and Catherine McLellan from Nepal  
Joanne Lewis from Nepal  
Tim and Rosimar Deller from Brazil  
Kevin and Linda Donaghy from Brazil  
Lee and Evelyn Messeder from Brazil  
Peter and Sheila Brewer from Brazil  
Justin Sismey from Brazil  
Peter and Sheila Brewer from Nicaragua  
Stephen and Elizabeth Allford from Zaire  
John and Rena Mellor from Zaire  
Mark and Andrea Hotchkin from Guinea Conakry  
Neil and Marjorie McVicar from Calcutta  
John and Lynne Thompson from Brazil

### DEPARTURES

David and Janet Kerrigan to Sri Lanka  
Joy Knapman to Sri Lanka  
David Payne to Nepal  
David and Ann MacFarlane to Italy  
Stan and Maureen Porter to Brazil  
Derek Punched to Brazil

### VISITS

Derek Rumbol to Zaire

### ANONYMOUS GIFTS

CAF Voucher GYE 190	134.88
Cardif	10.00
Carmarthen	10.00
Charities Aid	25.99
Dumfries	25.00
Harrow	10.00
Swansea	0.00
Watford	30.00
West London	46.00
	£301.87

### LEGACIES

Arton Mrs Janet	2,000.00
Bryant Mrs Florence	525.35
Clarke Miss Esther	500.00
Coleman Mr Arnold	1,373.25
Gowler Mrs Doris	1,600.00
Harding Mrs Irene	8.93
Horne Mrs Elsie Fannie	2,104.20
Lawrie Mrs Jeanne	1,000.00
Ledgard Mr John Syke	14,500.00
Maskell Mr Wilfred	9,826.11
Mole Mrs Margaret	2,500.00
Morley Miss Dorothy	100.00
Nuttall Mrs Margaret	239.19
Pegg Mrs Mabe	1,275.46
Pellowe Mrs Ethel	150.00
Roberts Miss Ethel Ivy	1,931.33
Rose Mr William Arthur	100.00
Smith Mrs Phyllis	761.34
Steggall Miss Ruth	657.28
Thorpe Mr Geoffrey	250.00
Turnbull Miss Mary	25.30
Turner Miss Dorothy	350.00
Wright Miss Hilda	12,116.61
Yerrell Mr Arthur	1,000.00



This month's Action Card picture of a young rice harvester reminds us that the world's child labour issue is still a challenge which needs addressing

#### CHILD LABOUR

The exploitation of child labour is a worldwide problem. Millions of children work to help their families in ways that are neither harmful nor exploitative, but millions more are forced to suffer as a result of working too young, for too many hours and in hazardous conditions. By the time such children reach adulthood they are often damaged physically, emotionally, morally and intellectually, having lost the opportunity for an education that would provide a better future for them. In the longer term, however, the exploitation of child labour not only damages the children concerned but also inhibits the emergence of a skilled workforce, forcing the countries concerned into a cycle of impoverishment.

It is predominantly the children of marginalised communities, their futures already threatened by inadequate diet and health care, who are at greatest risk from exploitation at work. In India, the majority of children in servitude are children from low castes or tribal minorities. In

Latin America, the highest incidence of child labour is found among the indigenous people.

The first ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation, set up to administer international trade, will take place in Autumn 1996 and it is against this background that recent calls for trade boycotts on goods produced by child labour have gained currency, however, child labour, will only be eliminated through long term programmes that involve the support of the national populace and address casual factors. The international community must support these movements by targeting development aid to help states provide primary education, job orientated education, education in the workplace, free school meals or stipends to parents to replace the child's earnings.

Anti Slavery International has been working tirelessly on the issue of child labour for over 20 years and you may send this month's card of support to them at The Stableyard, Broomgrove Road, London, SW9 9TL.

# Call to Prayer

Supplementing the BMS 1995 Prayer Guide. Week numbers correspond to those in the Prayer Guide. The 1996 Prayer Guide may be ordered from BMS, priced £1

## WEEK 46

November 12-18

### France

Join with Phil and Rosemary Halliday in giving thanks for their first baptism of French believers. Cecile became a Christian during the Billy Graham Global Mission back in March after attending church for about a year with her sister. Carole, Mark and Alain have grown up in Christian families and have now come to the point of publicly declaring that they have chosen for themselves to follow Christ. Pray for these four believers that they may truly be salt and light in their society and may grow in their Christian lives and bring others to the Lord.

As for Phil and Rosemary themselves, they now know that they will be staying at Massy Baptist Church. Phil will be the first full-time minister since the church began in the mid-seventies. Pray for them as they seek to consolidate the work already begun, and to continue to build it up so that, in due course, the church will be able to call and support a French minister.

Robert & Catherine Atkins will have moved to Toulouse where Robert will be taking over the pastorate at Toulouse Baptist Church. Though this church is only small in terms of members, the Atkins believe this is the right place to be and that God has great

plans for them and for this city.

Remember also the other BMS missionaries working in France - John and Sue Wilson at Morsang-sur-Orge; Ian and Pauline Thomas at Carcassonne; and Neil and Ruth Abbott at Clermont Ferrand. Chris and Christine Spencer are now back in the UK and seeking guidance for their future. ●●●

## WEEK 47

November 19-25

### Bangladesh-Christian Education

Pray for Valerie Hamilton as she nears the end of her service of 28 years with the BMS in Bangladesh. She continues to co-ordinate the Sangha's Sunday School programme through the eight Sammilanis (districts) and has a team of co-ordinators to help her. She is keen to get the matter of her successor raised at Sunday School Committee meetings, but the Bangladeshis are shelving this at the moment. For Valerie's peace of mind it is important that this is dealt with and the handing over is done satisfactorily.

Also remember Christine Preston as she starts the learning processes all over again in Kathmandu, and Sue Headlam recently returned to Bangladesh after a short period of Home Assignment.

David Kerrigan, who with his wife Janet, served in Bangladesh from 1982 to 1988 along with their two daughters Rebecca and Sarah have recently joined the team of BMS Representatives as the Asia Representative sharing responsibilities with Joy Knapman. Pray for them as they seek to settle in and find their feet again in this new and demanding role. ●●●

**WEEK 48**

November 26-December 2

**Africa: Secondments**

Secondments began in Africa in a big way after all BMS missionaries were instructed to flee from Zaire in September 1991. So several missionaries were found ministries with other Christian missions. As these were for limited time periods several are now coming to an end.

Andy and Jenny Wilson are now back in the UK after their time in Cameroon. They have taken leave of absence from the BMS and are considering various options for their future. Jenny has been taken on as a locum, while Andy looks for other work.

Helen Johnston, too, has a turn-around in her service for the Lord. She was in the UK last Christmas, and expecting to return to Sierra Leone when the European Baptist Mission recalled most of their missionaries because of rebellion and unrest. She is however now packing her bags to go out to Nepal with the UMN and expects to begin work there soon.

Alan and Ruth Wood, having served in Niger with SIM (Society of International Ministries), are also back in the UK. They had to return earlier than expected because Alan developed health problems, which have since

cleared up. From July this year Alan has been working as the Area Organiser for Wales for the Leprosy Mission, a job not unrelated to his medical experience in Niger.

Some missionaries are still continuing in their secondments, though, and still welcome our prayers:

Doctors Mark and Andrea Hotchkin are in Guinea with the Leprosy Mission, and they comment that in general hygiene standards in the central hospital are improving, and their workload is increasing as people gain confidence in the hospital.

Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins are in the Central African Republic with the Christoffel-Blindenmission, and are continuing to work on a project which seeks to prevent river blindness. ●●●



**WEEK 49**

December 3-9

**Children**

Loving Father God this is the time of the year when we prepare for the coming of Jesus into the world; may it be a time when children especially understand the value you place on even the smallest child. ●●●

**WEEK 50**

December 10-16

**Angola**

Simon Collins will have just finished a Tropical Medicine course in Liverpool. In the New Year he will be going to Portugal to continue language studies. Please pray for him as he is very conscious that humanly speaking he will be on his own, but please pray that he will be very conscious that God is his strength, and that Simon will be able to rely totally upon him.

Simon says, in his latest prayer letter: "For far too long (all my life perhaps), I have been safe within my comfort zone. I have rarely been in a position, and certainly never for any length of time, when I have been unable to cope using my own resources. God met me and told me - and pretty bluntly - that he was taking me to Portugal to get me out of my comfort zone and into a place where I will be able to rely on him."

Continue to pray for Angola, a land scarred by over 30 years of war. ●●●

**WEEK 51**

December 17-23

**Zaire:**

**Theological Education**

Owen and Deanna Clark have recently returned to Zaire after a period of Home Assignment. They are keen to use their experience gained from the Portable School at Kinkole to organise further elementary training courses for lay leaders in other parts of the district.

Mr Makiadi, head of the Christian Education department of the CBFZ recently suffered a stroke and died two days later. Elizabeth Allford recalls two things from his funeral service:

nobody said anything negative about him, which is unusual in Zaire, and secondly, his wife testified that in all their married life he had never beaten her, which is again unusual in that culture even amongst Christians. Please pray for a replacement for him. Rena Mellor has been involved in teaching adult education, and has been using available literature, particularly emphasising the importance of 'lay-training'. John Mellor writes; "Too many professional pastors think they can run the church's spiritual ministry on their own. It would be a contradiction in terms to think that Matt 28:16-20 could be fulfilled by a professional clique alone." ●●●

**WEEK 52**

December 24-30

**God with us**

An old familiar story of baby stable angels shepherds and kings: Lord God, strip away the trappings and help us to receive Jesus into our lives simply as your gift to a violent and weary world. ●●●



# The BIG SLURP

Following on from fair trade issues raised in the October edition of the Missionary Herald it is good to highlight the UNANIMOUS decision of the Baptist Assembly in Plymouth 1995 as to the resolution of the Alliance of Baptist Youth, that all churches in the Baptist Union of Great Britain should become fairly trading churches. This resolution agreed in Plymouth asks our churches to buy fairly traded goods, especially in the areas of tea and coffee, known as Clipper Tea and Cafe Direct.

Now there is an opportunity for everyone to get involved and take action on this issue.

The Big Slurp Action Day is Saturday 10 February 1996.

The Big Slurp (idea created by the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Christian Aid) is an opportunity for you to stand up and show the world that you are in favour of buying fairly traded goods and recognise the needs of workers in Third World countries and respond to them by buying fairly traded goods.

The publicity for the Action Day says, "We now want to challenge you and your church to hold coffee and tea tasting sessions, in some of the most unusual places possible and in the largest numbers. By this action you will draw attention to the plight of our brothers and sisters in Third World countries.

"We want to tell the newspapers and the local radio stations, what you are doing, where you are doing it and when you are doing it, so that they can come along and report on what you are doing. Then more people will know that they should be buying fairly traded goods."

Once you've taken part in the Action Day you will be able to apply to the Baptist Union of Great Britain for a certificate that will demonstrate to others that your church meeting says, "we agree to serve only fairly traded tea and coffee at church events."

Write to the Baptist Union of Great Britain, PO Box 44, Baptist House, 129

## TAKE 2

Broadway, Didcot, OX11 8RT for more information and ideas to help you become more involved. There will be something for everyone to get involved with.

P.S. The Missionary Herald would also be interested in hearing about what you did as part of The Big Slurp. We are particularly keen to feature the most unusual place for a Slurp. Write to tell us and send your photos in to the Publicity Manager, Missionary Herald, Baptist Missionary Society, PO Box 49, Baptist House, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

### GONE, AND FORGOTTEN

*Cardmas!  
Crackermas!  
Tinselmas!  
Jinglemas!  
Turkeymas!  
Puddingmas!  
Stockingmas!  
Drunkenmas!  
Excitementmas!  
Overdraftmas!  
Disappointmentmas!  
ALKASELTEZERMAS!*

*God came down at CHRISTmas,  
And found it wasn't.*

Gordon Bailey from "Moth-balled Religion"  
published by STL.

Did you know that the first Christmas card was sent out by Sir Henry Cole (1808 - 82) in 1843, but this did not become an annual custom until 1862.

### FOR DISCUSSION:

- Describe the ways in which you believe God is with you today. What senses, feelings or beliefs cause you to think this? Is this sense of God being with us revealed to those around us, and if so, in what ways?
- If Jesus were to come in person to your town (church or home) this Christmas, what sort of a welcome would he get?

- Recalling the words of Jesus recorded in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive", in what ways could you as individuals, and as a church give instead of receiving this Christmas?

### ACTION POINTS

- Read the Advent and Christmas stories in the New Testament again, in as many versions as possible. Rewrite the story in your own words using modern day situations in a) a familiar cultural setting and b) an unfamiliar setting - as far as you are able, but do try and use your imagination. Have you learnt anything new?
- This Christmas, highlight at least one group of needy people in your area, perhaps focusing on those who have needs akin to those in the Christmas story eg homeless people, or refugees. Arrange to do something practical to show them the love of God in action.

### QUIZ

Have fun with your friends, or at your Church's Christmas Party

- Name the continents in which BMS works
  - As of 1 October in how many countries is BMS involved?
  - On 1 October there were  
a) 105      b) 167      c) 193  
BMS missionaries
  - Link the following capital cities and countries
- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| Albania     | Bankok       |
| Bangladesh  | Managua      |
| El Salvador | Harare       |
| Indonesia   | Kathmandu    |
| Nepal       | Dhaka        |
| Nicaragua   | San Salvador |
| Thailand    | Jakarta      |
| Zimbabwe    | Tirana       |



# TAKE TWO

**5** Where would you find the following?

- A weaving project
- A mobile pre-school
- The New Life Centre
- Khimti hydro-electric project
- a 'Portable School'
- SCOTVEC

**6** True or false

Nepal is the world's only Hindu kingdom

**7** What is the main religion of the following countries

- Albania
- El Salvador
- India
- Sri Lanka
- Zimbabwe

**8** How many Baptists are there in Belgium

under 1,000, under 5,000, under 10,000

**9** In 1990 two BMS missionaries started work in France

how many are there now?

**10** Can you unmuddle these foods

- Albania - curry
- goulash - France
- Bangladesh - tortillas
- croissants - Hungary
- El Salvador - Zaire
- manioc - qofta

**11** How much money did BMS need in 1995 to meet its commitments

- a) £3 million
- b) £4 million
- c) £4 million

**12** Names are always changing. Can you give the old name of the following

- Sri Lanka
- Zimbabwe
- BMS Co-ordinators
- Bangladesh
- Home Assignment
- Mynamar

**13** How many times can the UK fit into

Brazil 15, 35, 55 times

**14** Give the main language used in the following countries

- El Salvador
- Sri Lanka
- India
- Angola

**15** List the countries where BMS is involved

**Answers**

- 1 Africa, America, Asia, Europe 4
- 2 28 - BMS has full partnership with 22 countries and is involved in a further 6 countries 1
- 3 b 1
- 4 Albania - Tirana Bangladesh - Dhaka 1  
El Sal - San Salvador Indonesia - Jakarta  
Nepal - Kathmandu Nicaragua - Managua  
Thailand - Bangkok Zimbabwe - Harare 8
- 5 A weaving project - Chandraghona, Bangladesh - the project provides work for women who were previously destitute  
A mobile pre-school - Sao Paulo, Brazil - the school is in a bus and visits favelas  
The New Life Centre - Chiang Mai, Thailand - the centre provides accommodation and training for young women, many having been rescued from brothels  
Khimti hydro-electric project - Nepal  
a 'Portable School' - Zaire - providing training for lay leaders  
SCOTVEC - Albania - training agricultural workers 6
- 6 True 1
- 7 Albania - Islam  
El Salvador - Christianity  
India - Hinduism  
Sri Lanka - Bhuddism  
Zimbabwe - Christianity 5
- 8 under 1,000 1
- 9 10 1
- 10 Albania - qofta  
Hungary - goulash  
France - croissants  
Bangladesh - curry  
El Salvador - tortilla  
Zaire - manioc 6
- 11 b 1
- 12 Ceylon - Sri Lanka  
Southern Rhodesia - Zimbabwe  
BMS Representatives - BMS Co-ordinators  
East Pakistan - Bangladesh  
Deputation - Home Assignment  
Burma - Mynamar 6
- 13 5 times 1
- 14 Spanish - El Salvador  
Sinhalese - Sri Lanka  
Hindi - India  
Portugese - Angola 4
- 15 List the countries where BMS is involved (give 1 point for every 7 correct countries)  
BMS has full partnership with  
Albania, Angola, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, El Salvador, France, Italy, Jamaica, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Portugal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Trinidad, Tunisia, Zaire, Zimbabwe (22) BMS has involvement with Bulgaria, Central African Republic, China, Guinea, Guyana, Mynamar (6) 4

Total points 50

**Resource ideas for group discussion starters**

by Jan Kendall

Jenny Smith reflects on her time as a BMS volunteer in Budapest, Hungary.

# God's knitting pattern:

Perhaps it was the Hungarian student who stayed with my family one Christmas when I was 12; It could have been the two Hungarian teachers who visited my church in Oxford. Then there were the couple my parents knew who went to teach English in Budapest. And, no doubt, the Christian conference in Budapest that I attended had something to do with it.

All four strands came together in what a friend calls "God's knitting", and I found myself teaching English in a Hungarian secondary school for a year. One year turned into two, and then three, with a new job at the International Baptist Lay Academy.

Every morning I taught English to

small groups of Eastern European Baptists, who had been sent to IBLA by their home churches. Many of the books they needed for their theological studies were in English, so they needed a good command of the language. We also ran evening language classes for the locals, as a kind of outreach.

As every missionary knows, nothing is neatly confined to a job description. When IBLA moved to new premises my work included furniture removal, setting up the library, and even interpreting instructions on Hungarian packet soup mixes for teams of American volun-

teers. During the six months the school was not operational, I assisted the pastor of the International Baptist Church, doing administration work, and spending hours travelling round the city getting things done which would take 15 minutes in England.

It has been an unforgettable privilege to live and work for God in Budapest but it was not all easy, nor as I had expected.

My biggest regret is spending so much time with ex-patriates that I didn't get to know many Hungarians.

I didn't accept my landlady's invitation to spend a day with her family until my last weekend. I spent all day translating for my sister, and was surprised how much I learnt in the process.

Even after three years of learning a foreign language, you can still make ridiculous mistakes. I confused the word "mise" (catholic mass) with "mese" (TV cartoons), which provoked some hilarity.

"It's just as if you never went away," say my friends in England, but three years have passed, and I am a very different person. If I hadn't learned patience in Budapest I would have gone crazy at the sight of a pointless post office queue.

One aspect of life I won't miss is Hungarian telephones. Some homes have been on the waiting list for 15 years, but when the phone arrives it often connects you to wrong numbers

Students from IBLA relax on an outing. Inset: Jenny Smith



# Waves

A personal and independent look at Mission by **Carolyn Green**



or cuts you off unexpectedly.

I will miss the very convenient 24-hour corner shop a minute's walk from my flat, the cheap and extensive Budapest public transport system, the constant sunshine and reliable weather, and the huge spectrum of size, colour and flavour of peppers.

Of course, I will particularly miss my students. Seeing off 15 of them on the Moscow train at the end of term was like the final scene of a film.

They caused an unusual spectacle on the platform, singing "Go ye now in peace" to their teachers. We shed tears as we hugged each other.

Not only do I now have friends in many parts of Eastern Europe, but I know that the English and theology they have learned, along with their wider experience of the Christian faith through meeting one another at IBLA, will change their home churches, and that those churches have the privilege of trained and mature lay leaders who reflect the love of God in a very special way. ●

**Jenny Smith** returned earlier this year having been a BMS volunteer with the International Baptist Lay Academy in Budapest.

I fail to see the difference between 'missionaries' and 'Christians'. Does the "great commission", (Matthew 28:19) somehow distinguish between those who go and those who stay? Perhaps I have a translation of the Bible which omits 'those who go abroad!' I think not. We are, as Christians, given no option. If we love Jesus, know salvation through Him and desire to please God, we are missionaries. The geographic location is up to God. Some leave home, family and comfort. Some do not. The brief for us all is the same.

Jesus speaks to all His disciples. How can we accept the "I am with you" bit and not the command to be missionaries?

Cross-cultural mission may, in fact, be the simpler of the two options. You stick out like a sore thumb for many reasons. People want to know why you are trying to fix their wells, partner in their theological colleges or shelter their street children. You can tell them why, it isn't embarrassing.

It's more complex and embarrassing to live counter-culturally in your own country. After all, you blend in. No-one's going to notice unless you are really different in the way you work, relax or socialise.

BMS missionaries live cross-culturally for God, that's obvious.

Where are we, the ones for whom the great commission sent us nowhere different? Are we living counter-culturally as Christians, as involved in social and political action as our overseas colleagues? Changing lives for Jesus? Are we making disciples, teaching and baptising? Are we enabling others, by our money and support, to fulfil Jesus' command? Or do we go to church and hope someone will notice.

About mission then. Did Jesus mean always 'them', never 'us'?

**Carolyn Green** is the current BMS vice-president and will take the president's chair next May. She and her husband, Steve, were BMS missionaries in Zaire from 1980 to 1991

# “SET APART FOR ME”

## Volunteers to work in partnership

### **Bangladesh:**

Short term (six months) mature administrator working with the Bangladesh Baptist Sanga, to assist with central office administration.

### **Hungary:**

Short term (academic year) TEFL teacher to train theological students in English at the International Baptist Lay Academy.

### **Albania:**

Short term (six months) teachers in primary and secondary age ranges.

### **Thailand:**

Short term (six months) administrator for Chiang Rai mission boarding school to help update systems which will effectively manage financial planning, working with local office staff. (Suit single volunteer or volunteer couple).

## Full time mission partners

### **Sri Lanka:**

Ministerial couple with educational background to serve the Sri Lanka Baptist Union, which aims to have a greater input into schools and colleges.

### **Thailand:**

Pastor to work with the Church of Christ in the Bangkok area to identify areas of outreach and social need, and encourage local Christians to become active in the community.

### **Nepal:**

A number of professional long and short-term posts in medical, administrative, educational and engineering areas.

### **Other opportunities:**

Surgeons, general practitioners, senior health staff, nursing managers, nurse educators.

Phone Andrew North on 01235 512077

