

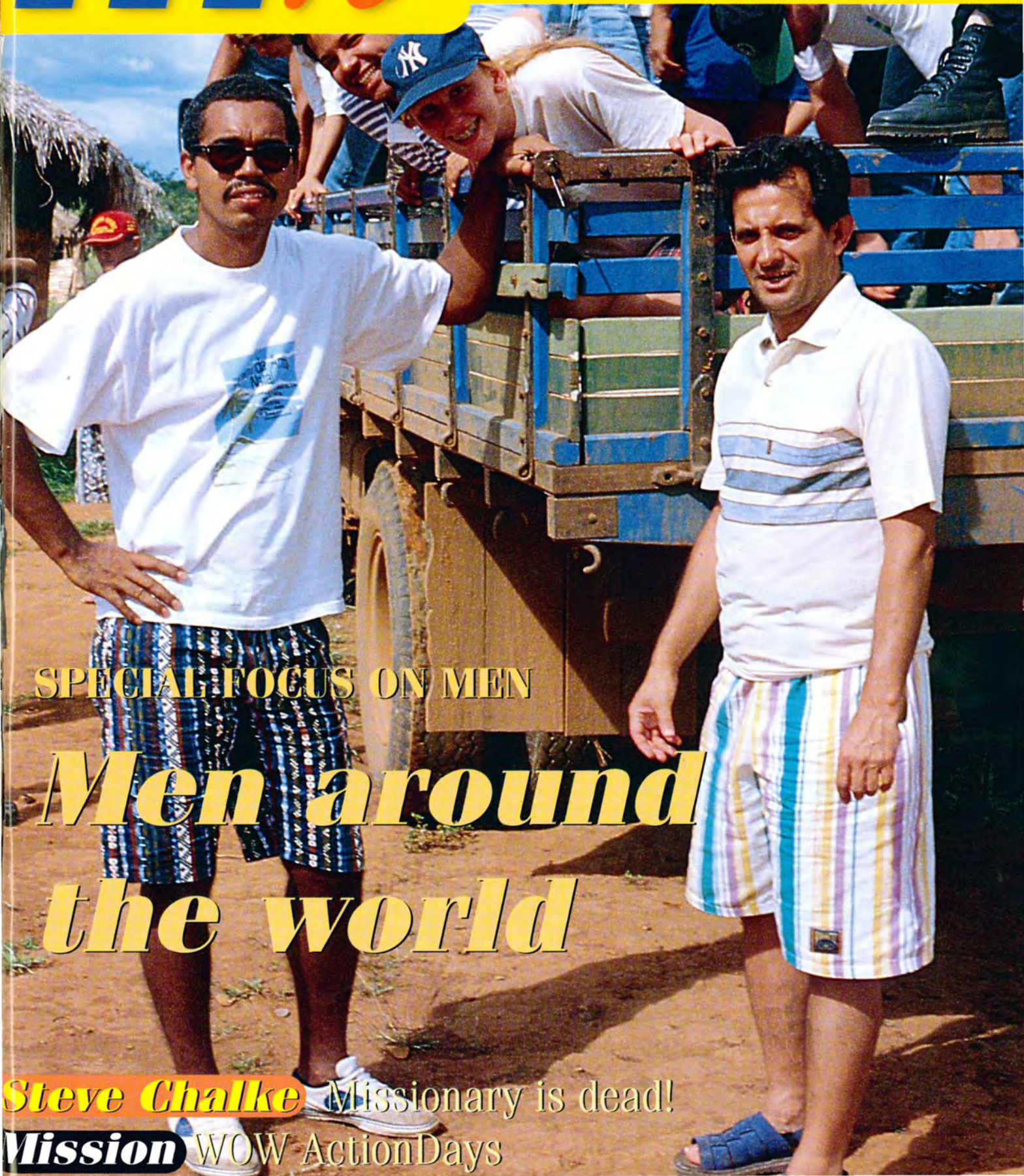
missionary **mb** herald

News around the world

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SPECIAL FOCUS ON MEN

Men around the world

Steve Chalke Missionary is dead!

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The subject of men is not an easy one to tackle objectively. The strides made towards

equality of the sexes in Britain have been accompanied by much controversy, not least in the area of leadership in the church.

Reaching men for Christ is a different issue, depending not on the gender of the leadership but on a vision and strategy to reach them. For a variety of reasons church is not a turn-on for men in many areas; take Brazil, for example, where the nation's "religion", football, is being used creatively as a means of reaching men with the gospel.

Our coverage this month is intended to help towards an understanding of the challenge to Christians in different cultures of a need to adopt different strategies in making Jesus known among men.

Richard Wells

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PO Box 49, Baptist House, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.
Telephone: 01235 512077 Fax: 01235 511265
E-mail: Editorial – bms_media@cin.co.uk
Other departments – 100626.1577@compuserve.com
Registered charity No. 233782

The views and opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the BMS

GENERAL DIRECTOR
Alistair Brown

MANAGING EDITOR
Richard Wells

CONSULTING EDITOR
David Pountain

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS
Steve Chalke, Sam Gibson,
Jan Kendall, John Passmore
Richard Wells

DESIGNER
Anthony Viney

ILLUSTRATOR/DESIGNER
Sarah Prentice

PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR
Jan Kendall

DIRECTOR FOR MISSIONARIES
Sian Williams
(for inquiries about service overseas)

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Missionary Herald

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NEW FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1997

YOUR TOP-RATED *mb*, PLUS . . .

- Leaders abroad – visiting church leaders from Britain report on how churches in other countries are working.
- Project feedback – news from BMS projects you have supported around the world.
- New columnists to join our own John Passmore.

FRONT COVER: Brazilian men preparing for a day out together

PICTURE: BMS Library

IS THERE A PROBLEM REACHING MEN FOR CHRIST THAT'S THE SAME THE WORLD OVER? OR IS IT JUST A WESTERN PHENOMENON?

JAN KENDALL ASKED FOUR BMS MISSIONARIES ABOUT THE ROLE OF MEN IN THEIR CHURCHES AND CULTURE.

Men the world

Q IS IT EASIER TO REACH MEN THAN WOMEN WHERE YOU'RE WORKING?

Owen: Not necessarily, but it's probably easier for men to reach men and for women to reach women in Zaire.

Sue: No, it's easier to reach women in Bangladesh.

Betsy: Yes, that's so in Albania too.

Vince: It's the same in Brazil.

Q WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS SO?

Vince: Brazil is a male-dominated society, a man's world. Women are not treated well or equally by Brazilian men. Men tend to be conscious of their masculinity and Church does not fit very well into their masculine image. Men work hard and long and use their free time for drinking and sports. The Catholic church supports this masculine role and accommodates Brazilian men.

Betsy: This happens in Albania, too, because Albania is a predominantly Muslim country, and men are placed in a higher position in society than women and young people.

Owen: Yes, in Zaire, too, there are traditional roles for both men and women, and these are largely followed.

Betsy: In Albania a man can allow his

questions



Men, church and

over



Q CAN YOU EXPLAIN A BIT ABOUT THE ROLE OF MEN IN THE CHURCH?

Sue: Men are in the leadership roles in the Bangladeshi church. Usually one woman (or possibly two) are on the diaconate but the role is less powerful than the man's. Men lead services, preach, pray, and make the decisions. Women only deal with the women's meeting and Sunday School.

Vince: In Brazil, too, men control the leadership; for instance, a woman could not be a pastor, but she does have a wide range of responsibilities within the church.

Betsy: There aren't that many men in the Albanian church, and their role is still marginal. But we're seeing God working among them, and some leaders are emerging. The men in the church are now encouraging

others to make this decision.

Owen: Traditionally men predominate in public affairs in Zaire, and this is reflected in church life - except for women's work, where the women come into their own.

Q WHAT ARE THE LOCAL CHURCHES DOING TO REACH MEN?

Betsy: At the moment there isn't much going on in this direction. However, in our church there is a very good men's club; and the more they become in number, the more proud they are to follow Christ together. We have a Bible study group for men which is going well; they seem to enjoy the freedom of being together as Christian men, without family pressures.

Vince: It's mostly visitation and personal evangelism by the Men's movement to contacts and friends. That's all really.

Sue: Local churches do little to reach

continues on page 6

'Local churches do little to reach men in particular. More is done to reach women. But the church needs to reach men. Men need to work among the men'

woman and his children to "change their faith" and to be baptised, but he must keep the tradition of his ancestors. If a man becomes a Christian he may even be called a traitor and be isolated from his family. We know one man whose family actually tore up his Bible because he was a Christian and this was seen as a disgrace for the family.

Sue: In Bangladesh it's culturally easier to reach women. Women are oppressed and many are looking for an escape out of the cycle of poverty. So I find them more open.

culture



MEN THE WORLD OVER

continued from page 5

men in particular. More is done to reach women. But the church needs to reach men. Men need to work amongst the men.

Owen: Little activity is organised specifically for men, apart from male-voice choirs, and, where there are professional people, Gideons and Full Gospel associations. Any general church outreach, however, in the form of evangelisation, house-visitation, and so on, is addressed to men because women only get involved in church activities with their husbands consent.

Q DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER OBSERVATIONS?

Sue: Because of the Islam religion, men are more important than women in Bangladesh - legally their word is worth the word of two women. So men in Bangladesh are in charge of everything, in every aspect of life.

'Traditional gender roles are changing . . . as more girls get an education'

Since I don't work among men I can't comment further about their role but I have noticed a change in the role of women with whom I work, and I feel the change is due to education and jobs. Although these jobs may be very simple, they do provide the women, and therefore their family, with extra income which gives the woman more of a sense of power as she looks after the family budget. Their husbands, in turn, respect their wives more.

Owen: In Zaire traditional gender roles are changing, particularly in the towns, as more girls get an education, and as young people are influenced by Western values through magazines and TV. The present economic situation, too, is having an adverse effect on the status of men, because of unemployment and

underpayment. This affects relationships within the family.

Vince: I think it's different in Brazil. Men there are very friendly and are often natural evangelists when converted. They tend to say anything or promise anything to be friendly without much concern to fulfil what they say. This means they easily accept the gospel, then forget it. They easily promise to come to church without any real intention to come. Brazilian men are superstitious and religious at a very shallow level, but when they are converted Brazilian men make fine Christians.

Betsy: I'd say in Albania there seems to be a difference between men coming from Muslim tradition and those coming from Catholic/Orthodox origin. Those from a Catholic or Orthodox origin have a Christian background and conversion means a deeper understanding of what they already know in part. But those from a Muslim tradition must make a total conversion, as well as a clear break with some traditional habits. This means it's almost impossible for a practising Muslim; and even for non-practising Muslims the change is great and they have to begin from zero. ●

Owen Clark, is involved in church work in Zaire, with his wife, Deanna

Betsy Guarna and her husband, Saverio, serve with the BMS in Albania.

Vince MacDougall is involved in church and evangelistic work in Brazil with his wife, Sadie.

Sue Headlam, a nurse in Bangladesh, is also involved in a Community Health Programme.

MAN E

They look surpris

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME, THEY USED TO SAY. BUT BMS WORKER **ANDY WILSON** HAS FOUND A NICHE FOR HIMSELF... AS A HOUSE-HUSBAND



ENOUGH FOR THE JOB

ed when they hear that I have to do the washing

Doctors and mechanics don't go together. That's what they told us when Jenny and I were engaged.

There was nothing about our relationship that most people would class as normal – meeting at Bible school in preparation to go to Africa, getting married in the middle of learning French in Paris and settling down to life in Cameroon.

Both of us were in great demand while in Cameroon. Jenny would have a constant stream of sick people knocking at the door, and for me there were

always sick cars or cycles, or people with all manner of mechanical problems to see me.

But when we returned to the UK, it was Jenny who found no difficulty in finding a partnership to join – there was a shortage of General Practitioners, especially women.

The question was, with Jenny working full time, who would do the housework?

Having lived on my own for 10 years, I was no stranger to cooking, ironing and cleaning but the idea of doing this for someone else didn't thrill me. And, anyway, how do you iron a bra?

It was decided that I would take on the household duties and look for a part-time job for a couple of days a week. It was then that I saw the position with BMS for a half-time person to look after the society's volunteer scheme, The Barnabas Project.

It transpired that Jenny and I started work on the same day, the surgery being 60 metres from our house and BMS being 60 miles.

People often ask: "And what do you do when you're not at Baptist House?"

They look surprised when they hear that I have to do the washing.

And it can be amusing when at work checking our diaries in the Department for Missionaries, my colleagues find they are interviewing, or having to attend meetings. I'm usually doing the vacuuming, or cooking the meal.

Being a house-husband isn't all that bad, maybe because it is only part-time and there is always someone with a car that needs medical attention whenever I need distracting. I've managed to avoid watching the soaps – except EastEnders which, according to BUGB General Secretary David Coffey, is standard Baptist viewing – mainly because there is always a lot to do in the house.

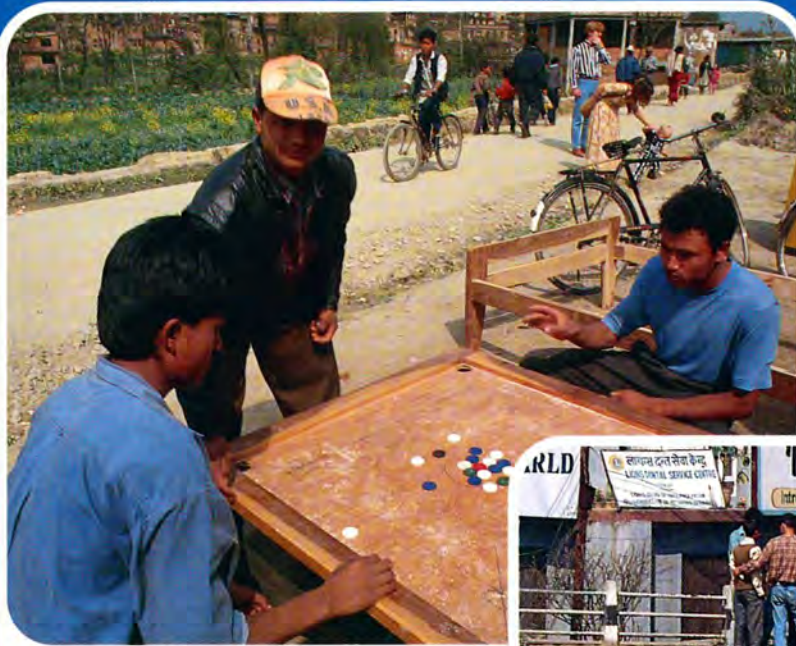
Looking in the supermarkets, I see that there are many men in the same situation as me, and we enjoy exchanging recipes in the deli queue.

I won't say any more about this, just in case Jenny thinks this is a cushy number... and wants to swap roles. ●



Andy Wilson is BMS Barnabas Project Co-ordinator based at Baptist House, Didcot.

Man to Man



MEN HOLD THE KEY TO STEMMING THE SPREAD OF HIV INFECTION IN NEPAL. **SALLY SMITH** SHARES THE FINDINGS OF HER RESEARCH IN THE COUNTDOWN TO A VITAL CAMPAIGN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST AIDS

One predominant theme in traditional Nepalese belief is the central place of food and eating. With food, gods are worshipped, ancestors sustained, malignant spirits pacified, social status defined, and long life, health and prosperity assured.

Food links people in relationships. A wife is responsible for preparing “bhaat” rice for her husband, but eats only what is left. He depends on her to provide the meal, she depends on him for the quality and quantity of what he leaves her.

Illnesses are commonly believed to be caused by a hungry malicious spirit. Because spirits are ranked in a similar way to the caste system for humans, ancestral spirits are regularly fed and so pacified but illness-causing spirits – usually of those who died inauspiciously or without family to perform the correct funeral rites – go hungry, so they attack humans either to “eat” them or to get a food

offering out of them.

These spirits may attack alone or may be sent by a “bokshi” – a woman with spiritual power who can induce a spirit to do her bidding by feeding it herself. The bokshi – or witches – are commonly identified as wives of men with whom the family is in conflict, or a

Food, evil spirits and sex combine to point the way forward in an attempt to stem the spread of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection in Nepal. But before any Christian mission health campaign can be launched among men there is a need to understand the complicated relationships between the sexes. Sally Smith has spent the past year researching these beliefs and is now incorporating the findings into a prevention and education programme for the United Mission to Nepal. But what is the relevance of all this to Christian mission? Firstly, consider how radical Jesus’ teachings were to the relationships between the sexes in his own day, and secondly, how HIV infection in Asia today is already creating similar reactions in society to the outcast – the lepers and the women – of Jesus’ day. The very ones he reached out to...

daughter-in-law, and their spells can be transmitted by food. For this reason many people will eat only at home.

It is here that sex begins to intertwine. Any evidence of women’s sexuality separate from a man, such as

in childbirth or in menstruation, is seen as polluting. At these times women are too polluted to enter the kitchen and prepare food. Neither must a woman touch a man or child at these times – it’s sinful and it is believed the child may become ill as a result.

A woman’s only source of spiritual purity or merit is gained through her relationships with men. She can exercise her spiritual power to preserve life, in particular, to prolong her husband’s life, by fasting during her unpolluted times. But if he dies early, she may be accused of “eating” him.

With information like this, along with research data, it becomes easier to predict the way HIV/AIDS may fit into the

beliefs about illness and misfortune. A wife with HIV is likely to be blamed for the illness; it is she who would be assumed to have had an affair. For this reason several



women said they would not tell their husband if they became HIV-infected.

Another strong concept in Nepalese belief is that sexual behaviour is wrong if exposed to public knowledge, which works against a wife who becomes infected with HIV by her husband. Since his extra-marital sex is hidden, the birth of an HIV-infected baby exposes the woman's infection but not her husband's.

Women are already blamed for infertility or the failure to produce a son and it is a simple step to add the blame for HIV and the husband's subsequent wasting and death. Already, in the short time that HIV has been in Nepal, prostitutes have been blamed for its introduction and spread, with barely a mention of clients' responsibilities. The next step in the process of absorbing this disease into the cultural framework could be to blame wives.

Given the negative social position of women in Nepali culture, health education about HIV/AIDS prevention targeted at a largely faithful and vulnerable group of women will be ineffectual. A better way is to exploit the positive position of men, seeking much more positive cultural concepts and applying them to HIV/AIDS preventative education.

In general, a man is better educated than his wife. He is older, has independent financial resources, is free to move in society, has access to literature and other communication media, and may choose his relationships.

His responsibilities are to provide for and protect his wife and children, to educate them and give the children a future. The concept of a "Bujne manche" – understanding one – is strong in Nepali society and there is a certain pride in not being ignorant.

There is a strong male network of friends and confidantes. Men say they would tell their closest friend – an

continues on page 10



THE MISSIONARY IS DEAD AND GONE

From 1 June 1997, the Baptist Missionary Society and its publication, *Missionary Herald* will officially be known as *Interlink*. In a statement issued yesterday, a senior source remarked: "The missionary is dead and gone."

Before you throw up your arms in horror, convinced that that "Steve Chalke has gone too far this time", let me set you straight. I'm not saying for a moment that we shouldn't be telling people about Jesus, that we shouldn't be doing this abroad, or that the Baptist missionary movement doesn't have a key role to play in the next millennium.

So what's the problem? Well, basically, it's the word: MISSIONARY. However fond we Christians may be of it, the reality is that nowadays it conjures up all the wrong images in people's minds. When the Great British Public (and half our church members) think of missionaries, they think of pith helmets, boiling pots, Dr Livingstone and the infamous "missionary position". When Britain had an Empire, "missionary" and "colonial" were words to be proud of. But today they're misunderstood, and therefore . . . well, frankly, they're an embarrassment.

Take another example of the way in which language changes. I'm an "evangelist". Telling people about Jesus is part of my job and part of my nature. But evangelist isn't a word I'm comfortable using publicly. Why? Because it, too, is misunderstood. Thanks to a few bad apples (most of them American) and a sea change in culture, the word is off limits. Like it or not, it's now shorthand for a narrow-minded, Bible-thumping, convert-seeking, money-grabbing, hypocritical bigot. And needless to say, that's not the kind of image I want to give out! So if I introduced myself as an evangelist on television, both ITV and the BBC would swiftly pull the plug.

Surely I'm overstating the case. Is it really necessary to go as far as changing the name? After all, as Shakespeare said:

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

But the truth is that even in Shakespeare a name can make all the difference in the world. In *Romeo and Juliet*, from which this saying comes, it literally makes the difference between life and death. If either Romeo or Juliet had been called Smith, their story would have had a much happier ending.

Contrary to what we'd like to believe, image does matter. That's why, to avoid old stigmas and to reflect modern medical opinion, The Spastics Society changed its name to Scope. It's also why the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship changed its name to Interserve, and one of the reasons why the Evangelical Union of South America and Regions Beyond Missions Union, when they joined together, chose the name Latin Link.

As the 21st Century dawns, why are we still using 19th century labels? Times have changed. Opportunities have changed. Even what we do has changed. The modern missionary is rarely a professional pastor. Instead, they serve as a teacher, doctor, nurse, engineer or agriculturist. In fact, entry restrictions in a number of countries make it impossible to send any other kind of 'missionary'. 'Missionaries' are just ordinary Christians who choose to work abroad, with support from a church and a sending body to act as 'salt' and 'light'.

It's not as if the word "missionary" were set in stone or sanctioned by the Bible. In fact, it's not even mentioned in the New Testament. It may be time-honoured, but the word "missionary" just comes from a Latin verb meaning "to send". The closest New Testament equivalent is "apostle", literally meaning "one who is sent".

It's time to stop using the word "missionary" altogether. In its place, we need new terminology that remains faithful to biblical principles, but more accurately reflects current thinking. So is it time to make an announcement?

The Baptist Missionary Society and *Missionary Herald* are dead!

Long live their staff, their commitment, their energy and their vision!

STEVE CHALKE IS INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR OF OASIS TRUST

EDITOR'S NOTE: We're very grateful to Steve Chalke for being our mh columnist for 1996.



continued from page 10

“understanding” friend – if they became HIV positive, so the advice of a respected friend would be especially welcome.

Rather than promoting the condom as an HIV/AIDS campaign symbol – something associated with negative ideas in Nepali thought – “attention grabbers” to advertise health education meetings for men need to harness positive values, building on the need to “protect” and “advise” youngsters and so prepare the ground for schools work.

Like...

“How does the ‘understanding man’ protect his family from this disease? Come and become an understanding one”

“Are you an understanding friend? If your friend is at risk of getting HIV can you protect him? How can you advise him? Wouldn’t you expect him to advise you if you were in danger?”

“As a responsible father, how can I protect my son from ruin?”

“Is it really an ‘understanding’ father who overlooks his son’s faults as long as they remain hidden? Are you going to wait for his ruin before you advise him?”

Freeing women from a complicated web of susceptibility to HIV will not be achieved without far reaching changes in society, most importantly, co-operation from the menfolk. It’s not a simple case of running women’s support groups or workshops.

In a culture where sexual partners are not necessarily confidantes, and sex may well never be mentioned between man and woman, let alone discussed; where a woman who speaks of anything sexual openly is in danger of being branded as a “bad woman”, it would be unethical to encourage women to persuade their menfolk to use a condom.

Western concepts of increasing women’s negotiating skills may be counterproductive for Nepali women. A start must be made with the men, emphasising their fidelity and role as protector of their family.

After all, isn’t that one of Jesus’ key messages? ●

BMS colleagues Ian and Sally Smith serve with the United Mission to Nepal, involved in health work.

new life in Jesus from a

PASSION FOR FOOTBALL

GETTING THE MEN INTERESTED IN A GROUP OF WOMEN IS NOT USUALLY A PROBLEM – UNLESS IT’S IN CHURCH, SAYS **MARK GREENWOOD**

The idea of activities specifically for men in the congregation in Genibaú came from a realisation that after two years of ministry, few men had shown lasting commitment to the Lord. The message isn’t getting across, be it for faults in our ministry or cultural factors which keep them from church.

As a man in the congregation, I had become lonely with so little male

women? Some way of communicating God’s love to these guys had to be developed, within a male environment.

Further incentive comes from the life experience of the congregation’s ladies. Many suffer abuses in the home, not always physical; infidelity too, drink-related problems (cultural norms) and bearing the brunt of the insecurity of living on the periphery. Life for these families is a struggle, and the men’s common reaction is to opt out of the responsibility; the women fight alone.

This pattern is far from universal, but the problem adds to the urgency of presenting a new life in Christ in an accessible way. One’s true manhood lies not in how many pints you can knock back, nor in the number of women you have, but in Christ. If a man understands that, not just he but his family is transformed.

Natural opportunities to involve the men in church activities arise through building work and special family services, which have, indeed, borne some fruit, but a more consistent programme with alternative forms of meetings is needed.

Most men who work here work a six day week. One of their few ways to relax is Sunday football, about which they are passionate. So the conclusion we came to, together with members’ husbands, was Sunday morning five-a-side with biblical reflections between matches.

Let’s see if it works. ●

Mark and Suzana Greenwood serve with the BMS in Fortaleza, Brazil, doing community and church work.



fellowship. How difficult would it be for a new convert from this predominantly macho culture to loosen his bonds with his mates and join in with a group of

news

MISSION NEWS FROM HOME AND ABROAD

Dream for the 21st century

Alistair Brown has a big dream. It's a dream of a world changed through Christians' deep desire for others to believe in Jesus Christ – a passion for mission.

It is no pipe dream, no super-spiritual castle in the air. Alistair is convinced the church in Britain must catch the dream. And, as the new General Director, he wants BMS to be a front-runner in realising this dream.

His passion for mission is infectious. The church at which he was in leadership until August has a fire for mission – it has sent mission personnel through Europe, Africa and Asia, it gives 20 per cent of its income to mission and every summer dozens of the congregation get involved in mission.

It's a church that is growing but then, says Alistair, a church with a big vision for mission IS a growing church.

With such a strong passion for sharing the gospel, articulated unequivocally, you'd expect Alistair to be as loud as he is determined.

Not so.

The former journalist on The Scotsman is anything but a blusterer. Quietly persuasive, calmly



discursive, he is a master of logic – theo-logic.

God has an unconditional love for a lost world and if we are children of this God, we have our Father's nature. Thus, he reasons, we share his love for the world. Result – we should also be passionate about mission.

"Mission is commanded by God – an order we can't set aside because we'd rather do other things," he argues. "Mission is also necessary, otherwise people will be lost. No one else has the job of sharing the message of Christ – God doesn't have an alternative plan if we fail."

For the past 21 years, Alistair (46) has demonstrated his passion for the gospel not only through his pastoral and teaching ministry but also through his writing. He is author of five books, the latest – *Near Christianity* – having just

been published by Hodder and Stoughton.

From beginnings in journalism in 1967, he began to feel God's call into full-time Christian work and gained a place at Edinburgh University where he studied for three degrees – BA, BD and PhD. While studying he was able to continue working part-time for The Scotsman, gaining valuable writing, editing and communication experience.

Growth has been a hallmark of his ministry. At Dedridge, from 1979 to 1986, membership rose from 37 to 150. At his last post, Gilcomston Park, Aberdeen, a rise in numbers not only forced a move to a new building in Gerrard Street and a change of name, but resulted in a church plant at Sheddocksley.

November opens a new chapter for Alistair and BMS. Commissioned at a

special service in Edinburgh in October, Alistair will carry through the BMS strategy, launched under retiring General Director Reg Harvey, into the 21st century.

In the next 25 years the strategy aims to direct BMS resources away from countries where more than 60% of the population claim to be Christian, and towards the unevangelised. It majors on these areas:

- Evangelism to unreached peoples.
- Urban ministries, women's, youth and children's work.
- Greater use of scripture, Christian literature and the media for sharing the gospel.
- Healing, development and education ministries.
- Commitment to the search for justice and peace.

It will require a strong commitment by Baptists to prayer, dedicated giving and active promotion.

Alistair says: "In the west, we've got used to ineffectiveness in our witness. We call that normal. By biblical standards and the evidence of what is happening in many parts of the Third World, it's abnormal. It's time for a big dream of what mission can accomplish in this world."

BMS 116 YEARS

Good news on the Cutting Edge

Programme

Thursday 7 November 1996

Western Area: Westbury on Trym
Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Saturday 16 November 1996

Cardiff: Albany Road
Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Tuesday 19 November 1996

Carmarthen: Penuel
Keynote speaker: John Lewis (Gorsley)

Friday 22 November 1996

Bangor: Penuel
Keynote speaker: Peter Dewi Richards

Saturday 23 November 1996

Wrexham: Chester Street
Keynote speaker: Geraint Morse

Friday 29 November 1996

Lancs and Cheshire Association:
Liverpool, Stuart Road.
Keynote speaker: John James

Friday 10 January 1997

Yorkshire Association: Leeds,
South Parade
Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Sunday 12 January 1997

Northern Association:
Middlesbrough, South Bank
Keynote speaker: Alan Pain

Friday 17 January 1997

Cambridge: Histon Baptist Church
Keynote speaker: Michael Quicke

Saturday 18 January 1997

Buckinghamshire: Union,
High Wycombe.
Keynote speaker: Steve Gaukroger

Friday 7 February 1997

Nottingham: Watnall Road,
Hucknall.
Keynote speaker: David Coffey

Saturday 8 February 1997

Leicester: Central Baptist Church.
Keynote speaker: John Lewis (Skipton)

Friday 7 March 1997

South-west area: Exeter, South
Street.
Keynote speaker: Ian Coffey

Thursday 13 March 1997

Wales, venue to be confirmed.
Keynote speaker: Andrew Green

Friday 14 March 1997

Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church.
Keynote speaker: Andrew Green

Friday 11 April 1997

Glasgow, venue to be confirmed.
Keynote speaker: Alistair Brown

Saturday 12 April 1997

Aberdeen, venue to be confirmed.
Keynote speaker: Bill Slack

Sunday 13 April 1997

Edinburgh: Charlotte Chapel
Keynote speaker: Bill Slack



Hundreds of Baptists have heard the message: BMS is committed to sharing the good news of salvation in Jesus

Christ worldwide and challenges Baptists in Britain to become actively involved.

It has been the theme of BMS President Carolyn Green's national tour, At The Cutting Edge, organised to inspire Baptists to commit themselves to world mission and to demonstrate that the society is at the forefront of making Jesus known globally.

She has been doing this through breakfast and lunch meetings with church

Stuart Clarke, pastor at St Leonard's Baptist Church, on the south coast in East Sussex, who hosted a leaders' breakfast in September. He vowed to share the real BMS with his local ministers' fraternal, and those who attended the breakfast left determined to encourage greater support within the churches.

The challenge thrown out by the celebration keynote speakers has set people buzzing about the response Christians should make to the need for sharing the gospel worldwide. David Hall, the West Sussex Baptist Association's Director for Mission, spoke at the celebration in Horsham of the value of people who take the good news and the importance of those who support them.

Carolyn is delighted with the positive response she and her Cutting Edge team are receiving. "We are very definitely at the cutting edge of mission today. Our vision is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ; it always has been. As an expression of the Baptist community in Britain, we need the wholehearted commitment of our people. If Baptists don't back the work, no one else will."

Since the tour started in the south-east of England in June, Carolyn has made presentations using video and slides to leaders in Essex, Sussex, Kent and the greater London area. Celebration meetings drew hundreds to Southend, Horsham, and Ealing and Bexleyheath in London.



leaders, receptions for those who promote mission in the churches, and celebrations with keynote speakers.

In the short time the show has been on the road, it has become clear that many hold an image of BMS as a dowdy, ponderous society locked in the past.

Nothing could be further from the truth, declared

BB appeal organisers retire



After 25 years as organisers of the Boys' Brigade fund-raising appeal for BMS, Beryl and Peter Dignum have retired. Over the years, Beryl and Peter, who live at Watford, Herts.,

have enabled BB companies attached to Baptist Churches to raise more than £200,000 to support the work of BMS.

Lorna and David Hyson, members of Cheam Baptist Church, Surrey, are to take over as appeal organisers. The number of BB companies taking part in the appeal has declined over recent years and the couple are hoping to reverse the situation with the support of missionary organisers in churches with BB Companies, encouraging them to support this worthwhile appeal.

Phil Marsden, BMS Youth and Children's Co-ordinator, who manages the BB project development, said: "Beryl and Peter have been involved in this important ministry for a long time and we're very grateful for all that they've done. We're glad that Lorna and David are able to take on this role and I'm looking forward very much to working with them."

French pastor dies in a fall



French Pastor and youth worker Christian Helmlinger died tragically on September 17, while working on the ceiling of his church building in Bordeaux. Christian was

working with a colleague when he fell, sustaining head injuries.

The 43-year-old father of four served as pastor from 1979 in both Grenoble and in Bordeaux, as national youthworker for the Baptist Union in France and formerly as a member of the executive committee for Baptist Youthwork in Europe.

Christian's ministry was an inspiration to many, not least of all the 1996 BMS 28:19 Action Team who worked with him in Bordeaux during their six month overseas assignment.

Jean-Pierre Dassonville of the Fédération des Eglises Evangéliques Baptistes said: "The French Baptist family and, we believe, the world Baptist family, are losing a real leader in his full strength and in whom we had great hopes."

Christian's family – in particular his widow, Natcha, and their four children – will appreciate prayer support. His church, friends and colleagues across Europe are deeply shocked.

01235 512077



OFF THE
SHELF

Stock up with BMS goodies – and help support the work of sharing the gospel worldwide! Our high quality notecards, with a French flavour, are going well. The inside is blank for your own message and a pack of 10 costs just £2.95.

High quality BMS Christmas cards, introduced for the first time this year, are selling quickly. You have the choice of three exclusive designs – a calligraphic card, 10 in a pack for £1.95, and two picture designs, 12 in a pack for £1.95 – so there's something to suit almost everyone's tastes. Order any five packs and you pay for only four!

Out this month is our free Ways of Giving leaflet. We've produced it in response to questions from a number of mission supporters about making gifts to the work of BMS. It provides an overview on a variety of ways to give and points the way to more detailed leaflets which are available.

Don't forget to place an order for your 1997 calendar. Each month's large colour picture is an evocative scene from a country in which BMS personnel are working. Designed to fit neatly on to a kitchen or office wall, the calendar is priced at just £4.50.

Thank you for your support of BMS during the year. I hope you have a pleasant Christmas.

CHRISTINE
NEILSON

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'If Baptists don't back the work, then no one will'

ARGENTINA

Following a vote by its citizens, the town of Villa Libertadot San Martin, 500km from Buenos Aires has banned tobacco, alcohol, discos, video games and lotteries. The ban is based on the teaching of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church of which most local people are members. The 5,000 population town is home to an Adventist university with 2,000 students and an Adventist health centre famous for its spa treatment. There are no long haired youths or mini skirts in Villa Libertador and the only music on local radio stations is folk and classical. (EN)

COLOMBIA

A storm of protest has erupted in Colombia over a suggestion by Human Rights Ombudsman José Castro that prostitutes should be sterilised as a way of deterring child abandonment. Castro said that preventing prostitutes from having children would fulfil the constitutional mandate requiring "responsible procreation" adding that the majority of juvenile delinquents are children of prostitutes. No evidence was offered to back up this claim. One journalist responded by saying: "Why doesn't he also propose assassinating street children, castrating transvestites, killing beggars, crucifying the blind, putting illiterate people in stocks and sacrificing blacks and indians in the gas chamber?" (LAP)

ENGLAND

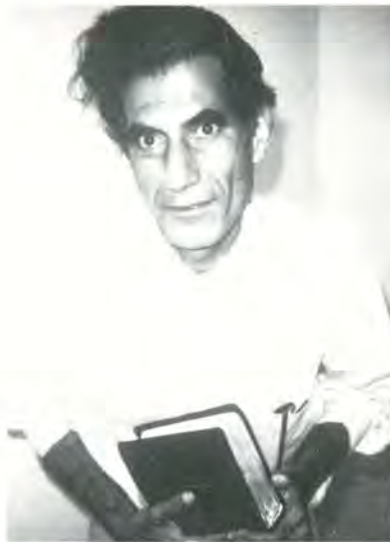
Youth With a Mission (YWAM) hope that their new study Bible, available from July 1997, will help readers "know God and make him known" by leading them through a study of the nature and character of God. The International Discipleship Bible (working title) is a joint project between YWAM England, the International Bible Society and US publishers Zondervan. Initially published in English and using the NIV version, this Bible will also incorporate teaching from YWAM's foundational Discipleship Training School's six month programme. Included will be thematic tracks, mini biographies on "heroes of the faith", profiles of unreached people groups and extracts of books by YWAM leaders. The new Bible will eventually be published in ten other languages with YWAM proceeds helping to fund other translations and distribution. (YWAM)

NORTH AFRICA

One of only 40 known Christians among a nomadic desert people group, has become the first to complete specialised training to help him return to share the gospel with his people. Ahmed, became the first Tuareg to graduate from a Christian university when he gained a degree in Christian Ministries from the University of Nations in Lome, Togo. The Tuareg, who are almost completely Muslim, are a fierce Saharan desert tribe. Ahmed helps to broadcast a radio programme which reaches Tuareg communities across north Africa and helps new converts in their faith. (YWAM)

News in brief

Future unclear for ex



'Unhappily the church here in Kuwait has not been successful in bringing Robert into a programme of personal growth in Christ in the area of accountability'

Persecuted Christian Robert Hussein is considering his future in America after fleeing Kuwait where he was under sentence of death, reports Sam Gibson.

The 44-year-old, was ruled apostate by a Kuwaiti court when he announced his conversion from Islam to Christianity. Originally, Robert had expressed a wish to remain in Kuwait despite the fact extremist fundamen-

talist Moslems had threatened to kill him. In August however, with the help of the organisation Christian Solidarity International (CSI), he fled to the USA on a six month visa, where he is currently in hiding.

After publicly announcing his conversion in December 1995, Robert's wife filed for divorce in a Shari'a family court. Islamic lawyers then

Cowboy missionaries saddle up

A new Youth With a Mission (YWAM) ministry, set up by former professional rodeo cowboy Brent Baumann, aims to evangelise unreached people groups by training American cowboys as missionaries.

Brent says: "Cowboys are a breed apart. They are their own people, and many of them wouldn't step inside a regular church - you have to go to them, in their environment, at the rodeo."

He believes that once they have made a commitment to Christ, cowboys are uniquely

qualified to share their faith in more challenging parts of the world: "They can go to parts of the world where the horse is a central part of the culture - South America and Central Asia for example.

"The typical cowboy also has qualities that suit him for frontier missions - he is rugged and used to hardship. He has boldness and doesn't give up easily."

Brent's ministry is not just for cowboys, it is aimed at anyone who identifies with the horse and Western lifestyle. (YWAM)

Update

ile Kuwaiti Christian

opened a case in the family courts to have him officially declared apostate (one who has turned from his beliefs) resulting in a loss of all rights to his children and the building business which he owned.

The religious ruling also opens the way for Moslem leaders to demand his execution. An appeal against the conviction on the basis that apostasy is not a civil offence was set for September 15 but adjourned for a month to allow either Robert or someone with power of attorney, to attend. It is not yet certain if Robert will go ahead with the appeal now he has left the country.

Christians and human rights groups across the world rallied to support Robert. He hid with expatriate Christian families whilst in Kuwait, an Internet site was set up to provide up to date information on his case and thousands of Christians wrote letters of

protest to the Kuwaiti crown prince and embassies.

The National Evangelical Church of Kuwait, which is tolerated but not allowed to evangelise, supported Robert's fight for religious freedom, said that he had distanced himself from the church. A pastoral team spokesman said: "Unhappily the church here in Kuwait has not been successful in bringing Robert into a programme of personal growth in Christ in the area of accountability."

Stuart Windsor, of CSI, says: "Robert still needs prayer. Please pray for Christians to come alongside him. He needs to come under the authority of the Church now."

Robert is grateful to the thousands in the UK and across the world who have prayed for him, written letters of support and offered other practical aid. He now needs to rest, grow in his relationship with Christ and plan for his long term future.

A of G join boycott of Disney

The Assemblies of God (AoG), with 2.5 million members in USA has joined the Southern Baptists in boycotting the Walt Disney Company because of its links to a film and book sympathetic to homosexuals.

Like the Southern Baptists, the AoG resolution objects to the book *Growing Up Gay* published by a Disney subsidiary and to Disney's acquisition of Miramax which distributed the film *Priest*, about a homosexual priest in the Roman Catholic Church.

The Southern Baptists also objected to "gay days" at Disney World and to the extension of health benefits to live-in partners of gay employees.

A Disney spokesman said: "We question any group that demands that we deprive people of health benefits, and we know of no tourist destination in the world that denies admission to people as the Baptists are insisting."

Both groups are demanding a return by the Disney company to family values. (ENI)

Chernobyl plea . . . 10 years on

The Belorussian people, keen that the world should not forget the effects of the Chernobyl nuclear power station disaster of 10 years ago, have issued a heart-rending appeal: Help save our children.

The effects of the catastrophe at Chernobyl, in neighbouring Ukraine, were felt as far away as Sweden, and Belarus, being next door, received intense radioactive fall-out.

Belorussian parents, who formed an association called Autograph of Chernobyl, say that by 1 January 1996 1,012 children had been operated on in the Thyroid Gland Centre, 424 of them having thyroid cancer, and the number of sick children increases daily.

But Belarus does not have the resources alone to provide all that is necessary for their children. In their appeal they ask why, when there are so many Chernobyl organisations and funds, the children who need help are not getting it. And they challenge countries with nuclear energy to give positive help to Belarus, a country they say is a hostage of nuclear power.

An Autograph of Chernobyl spokesman said: "We must do everything to let our children smile and enjoy their lives."

Already Baptists throughout Europe are offering healthy holidays for children from the nuclear fallout blackspots around Chernobyl – among them Belorussian youngsters like the one pictured – by inviting them into their homes.

The Children of Chernobyl health improvement programme, run by the European Baptist Federation, arranges for groups of up to 30 children to be hosted for a month by Baptist churches and members.

The 1996 programme has resulted in firm friendships which are expected to continue, at least by correspondence, for many years.



Phil's on the move

Phil Hindle, the BMS Co-ordinator for the South and West region, has moved to The Old Vicarage, East Lyng, Taunton, TA3 5AU. His telephone number is 01823 698977.



Around the churches

Children's Indian evening

Church members in Lytham St Anne's, Lancs, were transported to India by the young people at St Anne's Baptist Church.

As part of their support for the WOW Project, By His Stripes, they had organised an Indian evening and created a hospital in the church hall, using an idea from the project information book. They raised £110 towards the project.

During the evening visitors were able to take part in a tea tasting competition, visit an Indian tearoom, taste all kinds of Indian food and have a tour of the "hospital", guided by the children.

The youngsters who had created the hospital made sure they injected plenty of authenticity. Isobel Ferguson, the WOW co-ordinator at St Anne's, explained: "The Friends of Ludhiana and Vellore hospitals were good enough to allow us to borrow slides, videos and lots of pictures of both hospitals, so we had a lot of up-to-date relevant information."

When they weren't acting as hospital guides, youngsters took part in a competition to find the best dressed Indian boy and girl, and adults



Bursting the target

Followers and Adventurers at Crofton Baptist Church, in Orpington, Kent, surprised themselves when they burst their WOW project target by 150%!

The fives to sevens and sevens to 10s groups have been working to raise money for the By His Stripes project to fund work at four Indian hospitals. The youngsters set a £600 target and in September they sent BMS a cheque for £900.

"We're delighted with this total," enthused Crofton's WOW co-ordinator Ursula Kemp. "The youngsters have worked hard to achieve this."

Much of the total – more than £120 – was raised at a bring and buy sale, the leftovers from which were sold every day at the church playgroup.

Dates for your diary

If you are organising a world mission event open to visitors, and would like it publicised in this diary, please let us have details at least three months in advance. Drop us a line at: Diary Dates, World Mission Link, BMS, PO Box 49, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

Presidential tour

In the next three months BMS President Carolyn Green will be visiting the West Country, Wales and Northern England meeting church leaders and sharing in celebrations as part of her national tour At The Cutting Edge.

7 November at Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol

16 November at Albany Road, Cardiff

19 November at Carmarthen

22 November a bi-lingual celebration at Penuel, Bangor

29 November at Liverpool

11 January at South Parade, Leeds

12 January at South Bank, Middlesbrough

Information on all the Presidential Tour meetings and celebrations can be obtained from the BMS Co-ordinators.

Other dates

Saturday 2 November

Shropshire Missionary Council autumn meeting at Newport

Details: Clifford Challiner 01743 790377

Wednesday 6 November

West of Scotland Women's Missionary Meeting, Adelaide Place BC, Glasgow

Theme: India

Details: Freda Kennedy 0141 6320883

Monday 11 November

Women's Missionary Fellowship meeting, St Stephen's Church Centre, Glasgow - celebrating the Ludhiana Centenary

Details: Ann Durning 0141 6416248

Saturday 16 November

Merseyside Annual Missionary Celebration

Details: Merrill Morgan 0151 2560209

Sunday 24 November

Oldham District Mission Day

Details: Ann Lees 0161 6248957

Wednesday 4 December

West of Scotland Women's Missionary Meeting, Adelaide Place BC, Glasgow Theme: Bangladesh

Details: Freda Kennedy 0141 6320883

Aberdare Auxiliary Zenana Meeting, Bethel Chapel, Abernant, Aberdare Details: Margaret Picton 01685 876864

Nov/Dec 96

Inspiration, motivation, ideas, news
on world mission for churches...

Mission Link



enjoyed dressing in saris. An Indian story teller kept children and adults amused and young people took part in Indian games.

The WOW project aims to raise £6,000 for four hospitals in India. By the end of September youngsters from churches throughout Britain had raised almost £4,000.

Outreach to a million

Westbourne Park Baptist Church was turned into an outdoor stage, an indoor entertainment area and was host to a team of 100 involved in mission to more than a million people at the Notting Hill Carnival in August.

It was truly an

international outreach. Organised by the national evangelistic organisation Viz-A-Viz, the One in a Million project team was made up of Philippinos, Brazilians and people from across the UK.

The team went into the carnival performing theatre, puppetry and street art. The team spoke with hundreds of people and many attended evangelistic events at the church.

Dennis Pethers, of Viz-A-Viz, said: "There are very few places in the world where, for a few days, in excess of one million people are squeezed into a few square miles. This is an opportunity for the gospel that is too good to miss."

Plans are underway for Carnival '97 and Viz-A-Viz are seeking to recruit a larger team.

For further details contact: One in a Million on 01277 215222.

Dear Audrey...

From a missionary couple in training

"We are enjoying our time at college and the weeks are rushing by. When we last talked about Link-Up you said we would soon hear about our Link-Up groups. As we've not heard anything yet we wondered what was happening. If we don't make Link-Ups soon we won't be able to visit the groups before we leave the country".

From a Missionary Secretary

"I'm writing about our Link-Up missionary. Our missionary retired at the beginning of the year and nothing seems to be happening to get a new Link-Up. At our last Church Meeting many people said how unsatisfactory this was. We thought Link-Up was about communication - how can we communicate if we don't have a missionary? I'm having real difficulty in keeping our church interested in the idea of Link-Up."

Telephone call from a Link-Up Contact

"I'm sorry I've not got back to you about a new missionary Link-Up but I'm having real problems in getting the churches in the group to meet or even get back to me to say what they think. I've written to everyone twice now and tried phoning, at last I've managed to get a meeting arranged for next month - I'm sorry it's taking so long."

YES - Link-Up is about communication but not just between churches and the Link-Up missionary, it is also about communication between the churches in the Link-Up group. When a Link-Up ends information is sent to the group so that a new Link-Up can be made. The difficulty seems to be in getting the churches in the group to meet and agree what they want to do, somewhere the communication is not as it should be. If nothing seems to be happening in your group about getting a new missionary Link-Up get in touch with your Link-Up Contact. Talk to them. Ask if you can help in any way. Make sure your own church gives the meeting to discuss a new Link-Up priority.

It really would be good for world mission if making a new missionary Link-Up never took longer than three months - could that be a New Year resolution?!

Inquiries and feedback about Link-up may be addressed to :

Audrey Rowland
World Mission Link Organiser

E-mail Audrey on: bms_media@cin.co.uk
or write to her at
BMS, PO Box 49, Baptist House
Didcot, Oxon, OX11 8XA.

Telephone 01235 512077



World Mission
for Churches



WOW

characters: Globetrotter, who brought postcards from around the world and got children to dress up in different country costumes, and Boomer who learned what it meant to be a missionary. Then came a clown who taught everyone Matthew 28:19 as a memory verse. We looked through a Window on Zimbabwe and pretended to squash into an African taxi, learned an African song, watched a puppet show with two very amusing birds and ended the day at 4.00 pm with a few party dances just to make sure all energy was now well and truly gone. The children went home excited, exhausted, but totally enthusiastic about world mission and with a greater understanding of what it meant to be a Christian and a missionary. A special WOW song was also created for the Action Days:

WOW it's amazing
 WOW can't believe it
 WOW did you know that?
 No I didn't know that!
 WOW it's fantastic
 Boingy like elastic
 The wonderful world of WOW.
 Take a look through a Window on the World
 It's lots of fun and there's loads to learn
 About God's world and his mission for you
 To tell his people that he loves them too.

WOW ... IT REALLY IS AMAZING HOW GOD CAN USE EVEN THE SMALLEST CHILD TO FULFIL HIS GREATEST COMMISSION. **PHIL MARSDEN** TOURED THE UK THIS SUMMER TAKING WOW ACTION DAYS TO EIGHT DIFFERENT LOCATIONS.

The aim was to teach children more about God's world and show them the important part they have to play in world mission. The WOW Action Team was made up of four ex-28:19 Action Team members and one of this year's 28:19 UK Action Team members and was headed up by Phil Marsden, the Youth and Children's Co-ordinator with the BMS.

Each day began at 10.00 am with

some lively songs and aerobics to make sure everyone was wide awake. Games, sketches, memory verses and a whole range of other activities followed.

After a quick picnic lunch the fast moving programme continued with a wide variety of outdoor activities ranging from football and ring-throwing to racing round assault courses with a giant earthball.

The children returned to base to meet their favourite WOW magazine

This even received a special radio broadcast when Radio Nottingham came over to do a live report on the WOW Action Day!

The children learned the importance of getting involved in world mission. They were encouraged to support missionaries through prayer, writing letters, fund-raising, etc and to be missionaries themselves by sharing their faith both at school and at home. It was great to hear small children praying for

IT'S AMAZING

missionaries and whole countries and to see their faith as they prayed sincerely about specific situations. Hundreds of letters were written by the children to encourage our 28:19 Action Teams before they went overseas this year. Children gave testimonies about occasions when they had shared their faith and the good and bad responses they had had. Some told us about a friend who had now got involved in church because of their witnessing. Others told us of bullying they suffered at school because they had been open with their faith. All were encouraged to learn that they were true missionaries facing the joys and challenges that missionaries all around the world face each day, and the way one little girl's face lit up as we told her she was a missionary in her own school made it all worthwhile.

The WOW Action Days form just part of the BMS's new WOW club for children aged 6-13 years. The WOW magazine launched in January has seen subscriptions rise from around 4,000 to 8,000 in just six months. The WOW world maps together with the attractive colour stickers have been a real hit and material from the WOW Action Pack has been used to good effect in many churches around Britain. Plans for next year's WOW club activities are now well under way and children can look forward to receiving Globetrotter's special postcard album together with postcards from around the world during the year. A new WOW Action Pack is planned and WOW Action Days are set to hit Britain any time, any place, anywhere! ●

If you would like to host a WOW Action Day in your town let us know.



Someone from Stockport Baptist Church in Cheshire wrote:

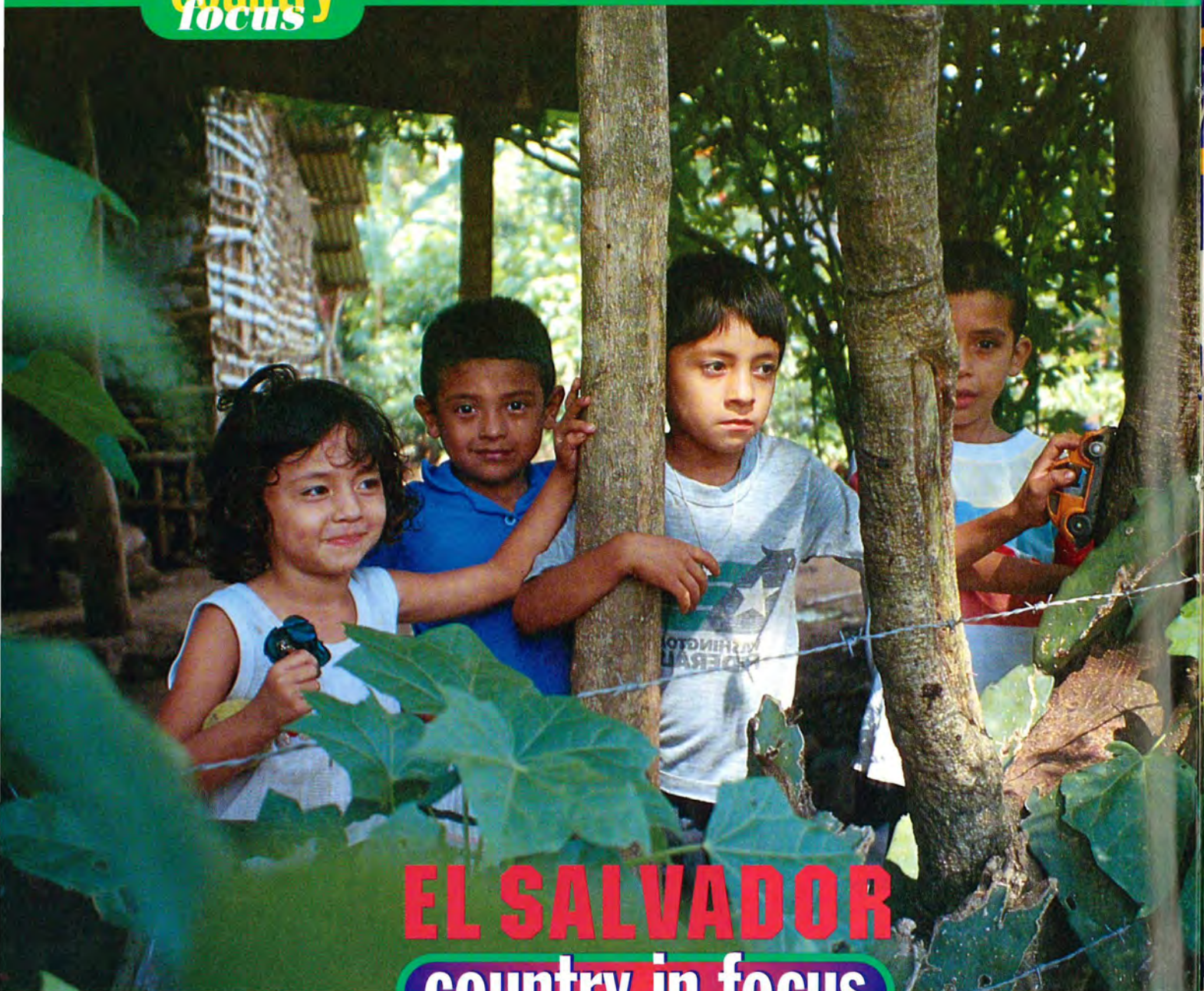
"I am writing to say how much we enjoyed the recent WOW Action Day at Huddersfield. Congratulations to you and the 28:19 team for such a challenging, fun and fast-moving programme! I am only sorry that so many of our Junior Church missed it through being on holiday. It was great to see the commitment and enthusiasm of your team. Everything was so well thought out and ran smoothly. I was thrilled that one of the lads we brought, a new-comer to the group, heard the gospel so clearly. My own children haven't stopped talking about the day since we journeyed over the Pennines on Tuesday. They particularly liked meeting the characters from the magazine."



WOW GOODY BAGS



All children at the Action Days received a WOW pencil, badge, balloon and fluffy Globetrotter character. We have put together goody bags of WOW items which can be yours for £5.00 each. Each goody bag contains the four items mentioned above plus a T-shirt printed with the bright WOW logo. Please use a crossed cheque made out to "BMS" and state T-shirt size required (chest 80/84/88 cm) when ordering.



EL SALVADOR

country in focus

WHEN THE JEWEL HAS TARNISHED

EL SALVADOR is the smallest and most densely populated country in Central America with 256 people per sq. km. It lies between Guatemala to the west and Honduras to the north and east, with a coastal plain bordering the Pacific Ocean to the south. Beyond the coastal plain is a mountainous range which includes more than 20 volcanoes. Most of the country's towns and settlements are in the cooler, more temperate highlands rather than on the hot and humid coast.

In the 16th century the Spanish invaded the kingdom of the Pipal

Indians (related to the Aztecs) and called the territory they inhabited Cuscatlan or 'the Land of Jewels'. From then on it seems that internal and external conflicts have blighted this small nation.

The most recent power struggle has been a civil war that has lasted from 1979 - 92. As elsewhere in South America land had been unequally distributed with 90 per cent of the rural population owning only 20 per cent of the land. In 1994 the country's 60 leading families still owned 33 per cent of all the land, and this is land that is

used to grow coffee for export purposes. This recent civil war resulted in at least 80,000 people being killed and 550,000 people driven from their homes and a further 500,000 going into exile.

Though the majority of El Salvadoreans are Roman Catholic, the church opposed the oppressed and human rights abuses by the ruling minority in the civil war. This tension was highlighted when the Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated by right-wingers in March 1980 while taking mass in the capital, San Salvador.

El Salvadorean children at play



The civil war has exacerbated many social problems. According to official figures 29 per cent of people were living in a state of poverty, and another 22 per cent in extreme poverty. Over 400,000 six year-old children suffer from chronic malnutrition. Unemployment stands at 24 per cent.

Of those who are in work almost 40 per cent work in agriculture, which generates about ten per cent of the national income. Coffee is the main export accounting for 45 - 50 per cent of the country's total export products, followed by cotton (declining), sugar (declining) and cotton textiles (increasing).

Of all the Latin American countries El Salvador has the greatest environmental problems. Deforestation has resulted in the elimination of 90 per cent of its vegetation, and only two per cent of its virgin forest is still intact. Two-thirds of the land suffers from erosion and 90 per cent of the rivers are polluted by sewage and chemicals.

So maybe El Salvador is a jewel no more. Maybe not. Today's peoples have only just begun to pick up the pieces after the years of civil war. The coming of peace has meant that now is the time

to rebuild a wounded people.

BMS personnel David and Rachel Quinney Mee are helping to do this. Based in San Salvador, David is involved in church work, and Rachel works with women's groups. Both spend a lot of time ministering to the poor. ●

Facts and figures El Salvador

Area: 21,400 sq km
Capital: San Salvador, pop.1,522,000
Population: 5,943,000 (1995)
 Estimate for year 2000: 6 million
 Annual population growth: 2.5%
People groups: 89% mixed descendants of American natives and Spanish colonizers (mestizo), 10% indigenous, 1% European.
Religion: Catholic 75% (growth 0.8%), Protestant 21% (growth 5.9%), Foreign marginal eg Jehovah's Witnesses 2%, Non-religious/other 2%.
Languages: Spanish is the official and predominant language. Indigenous minorities speak Nahuatl.
Literacy: 76% male, 70% female
Health: One doctor for every 2830 people Children per woman: 4.2 (1991) Under five mortality: 67 per 1000 (1991). Calorie consumption: 102% of required intake.



Fact

This recent civil war resulted in at least 80,000 people being killed and 550,000 people driven from their homes and a further 500,000 going into exile.



Preparing for a campaign

To twin or not to twin...?

Keith Nichols reflects on the merits or otherwise of twinning with a Third World church



OUR VISIT to El Cordero de Dios Baptist Church, San Salvador, El Salvador was in reply to a visit to Didcot Baptist Church three years ago, of the then pastor of El Cordero. It seemed to take that amount of time for us to respond, and plan our return visit.

As we set out, Mike (Deacon for Mission), Angela (Church member, very involved in the community and previously Deacon for Community and Social Action) and myself (minister) had very little idea of what our two and a half weeks in El Salvador would actually entail. The programme of our visit was put together by El Cordero and took in visits to projects, people and regions throughout El Salvador and even Guatemala. On several days this programme kept us busy from as early as 6.00 am until 9.30 pm at night!

Now we're back we feel we're very educated as to the people, culture, faith and country of El Salvador, and the life and members of El Cordero de Dios.

And furthermore I can only highly recommend such twinning arrangements, provided they come from a genuine God-guided interest, that will be sustained, on a basis of equal status with the overseas church, and a readiness to receive far more than we can ever give. ●





Home is where the heart is

MIKE QUANTICK RELATES SOMETHING OF HIS EXPERIENCE OF EL SALVADOREAN HOSPITALITY.

EL CORDERO DE DIOS (or Lamb of God) is a small Baptist church in Zacamil, a poorer part of San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador. It's a small church with a regular worshipping congregation of about thirty to forty. Didcot Baptist Church established a twinning link with them in 1994.

Recently I was part of a small delegation visiting this church from Didcot church. The first thing to hit me as I arrived in this country, where people are still in a state of shock after the war, was the generosity and genuine appreciation of our visit given us by the people. Even as we stepped out of the airport into David Quinney Mee's jeep the church members had written a message of welcome in the dirt of the back window.

We all stayed in the homes of different church members. My host was Vilma who lived with her daughter Noemi and sons Misael and Juan José in a small ground floor multi family flat.

None of them spoke English! The flat itself consisted of a small lounge area, a dining/kitchen area, toilet/shower and three small bedrooms. I was given Noemi's bedroom, which had two single beds, a hammock as well as a sewing machine and what appeared to be an ironing table, and she was relegated to the lounge. It was not long before I discovered their flat was open house to the extended family and other church members who often stayed overnight. The second Tuesday proved to be such a case when Noemi's cousin Jenny came to stay for the night - in the spare bed in my room! The next morning there were even more surprises: Jenny decided my hair needed cutting and appeared with a large pair of scissors and a razor. It was only later I discovered she had done a course in hairdressing!

It was not only church members who gave us hospitality. One particular community stays in my mind, that of

San Roque, which was made up of much poorer people living in almost slum conditions on the side of a volcano at the back of El Cordero church. Most of the people here did not have a job, or like Carmen and Rufinio who lived in a corrugated iron construction they were trying to eke out a living, in this case, by making tortillas. But even here we were offered something to eat or drink, and it was here we had our first taste of atol, a white milky drink made from boiled maize.

So often on trips like this the visitor goes mentally prepared for all the facts and figures that will be taken in along the way. What I was not prepared for were things like how much the people had to teach us, in this case, about the ministry of hospitality. Again and again as we visited different communities within San Salvador and in other parts of the country - wherever we went, those we met were anxious to offer us something from the little they had. ●

Images from El Salvador.
Pictures by Mike Quantick.

After the war – the visitor's view



THE HOSTILITIES between the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front) and the government forces came to an end with the signing of the "Peace Accord" in 1992. The FMLN under UN supervision disarmed, and rebel forces returned to their usual routines of life. In the rural setting guerilla and non-guerilla are indis-

tinguishable to the eye of the visitor, although in the city I was led to believe party allegiance still greatly affects promotion and war maimed find places to beg.

Although the Peace Accord promised to address the essential causes of the civil war, especially the possession of a great proportion of the land by only a small percentage of people, very little has actually changed. Thus continues the insecurity, the trap of poverty for many in rural settings and the development of shanty towns on the edges of San Salvador the capital that equal the slums of any two-third world city.

There is left an overwhelming tiredness from the civil war and a communal war psychosis that is yet to be meaningfully addressed. In some communities an ongoing weight, not of bitterness, resentment or revenge, but of sadness that great social and economic injustices are yet to be properly addressed, can almost be felt.

Time spent speaking

- to an unemployed male in the slum of San Roque, a community perched on the volcanic slopes on the side of San Salvador, where he and his family were about to be evicted from their bamboo and corrugated iron home

- to an adolescent male in another community within the capital seeking to escape the subculture of despair, drugs and violence

- to pastors, both male and female, desperate to know how to meaningfully pastor those in the grip of rural poverty and survive themselves on the meagre support their congregations could give

- have all left their imprint on the conscience. But no impact is as great as that left by the dignity, generosity, hospitality, open-heartedness and willingness to tell their story of even the poorest, oldest, or frailest that we had the privilege to meet.

Keith Nichols is senior minister of Didcot Baptist Church, Oxfordshire.





Little space for optimism

FORTY DISPASSIONATE words in the morning newspaper told of murder. A man resisting a car theft was shot through the heart in front of the home of a family from our church.

With shaken words they broke the news to the man's wife – by telephone.

How many words are needed to speak for the broken lives behind the statistics? Thirty six per cent more violent deaths are recorded here per year than at any time during El Salvador's war.

The United Nations' latest report on the Salvadoran peace process was some 3,000 words short, leaving little space for optimism. Public (in)security is a highlighted concern. The National Civil Police, formed in the hopefulness of the peace accords, are now in danger of "losing their identity as an institution at the service of the community and becoming a new instrument of power prone to authoritarianism and no longer accountable to the people".

The concerns raised in the report, and the government's contempt for both the concerns and their authors, offer little confidence in the sincerity of official interest in democracy.

Elections next March mean politicians are now preparing their words to try to persuade increasingly disillusioned voters to try again. Some churches will play an education role, helping citizens register and know where, and how, to cast a vote.

Who to vote for becomes less simple.

Much more than bricks came down with the Berlin Wall. Old left-right slogans and "political correctness" are weighed in the balance and found wanting. While issues as deeply rooted as steadily-growing poverty and social exclusion demand equally radical responses, they must go beyond tired ideologies, generating real change in human lives.

Shifting boundaries demand new partnerships and creative, lateral thinking.

Can secular and sacred learn to dream together and dare to make our best Word flesh?



David Quinney-Mee

Improving your outreach to non- Christian men



So how good is your church in attracting and keeping men?

Attracting men

List all the events your church holds that are:

- Entirely and unashamedly evangelistic.
- Friendship evangelism-orientated, to which you are encouraged to bring friends and neighbours.
- Directed at non-Christians.

How many of these are specifically for men to come to know the Lord?

How many non-Christian men have a link with your church fellowship?

For example: non-Christian husbands of Christian wives, non-Christian fathers of toddler group, pre-school playgroup and Sunday school children.

Does your church have a strategy to reach these men?

What could your church do to improve its outreach to non-Christian men?

Think about places: the church building is probably not the best place. Choose somewhere that's neutral territory and where non-Christian men will feel comfortable. Use someone's home, hire a room in a pub or a cinema.

Think about timing: does the time you've chosen fit your schedule but actually means that the person you're inviting will have to miss a football match on TV or their badminton evening?

Think about what to do. Find out all you can about the hobbies, interests and other leisure pursuits of those you're inviting. Christians can sometimes be couch potatoes, and you may be surprised how athletic and enterprising your non-Christian friends are!

Think about ratios between the Christians and the non-Christians

you're inviting: if there's only one non-Christian there will they feel threatened and that everyone is getting at them. If there's only one Christian you will have problems if everyone wants to make a commitment there and then – although that's a nice problem to have!

Just for a minute...

Imagine you're a non-Christian man, who's been dragged along to a Sunday family service by your newly-converted wife. Forget all about the church's history and traditions; forget all the resolutions passed at church meetings about the colour of the curtains; even forget the Christian baggage that has built up concerning this building and what you do in it week by week.

Try to come to this service as if it's all totally new and you have no preconceptions.

What would your reactions be to the following?:

- Posters around the place.
Are they advertising things for women, men, children or all three?
- The Furniture
Does it look like it would be more at home in an architectural restoration yard? Is it better or worse than an average person would have in their home? Are the chairs comfortable? Is there enough knee room?
- The general state of repair or disrepair of the building and furniture.
Does this say anything about the number of men around to keep the church looking good? (Sorry . . . but it's usually the men who do church maintenance)
- People coming in for the service.

Do they acknowledge one another? Do they greet you? Do they fill up the back seats first which makes you wonder: is there something your wife hasn't told you?

- The rather straight people emerging from a room at the side just before the service starts? Are they the hierarchy? What have they been doing – exchanging commiserations over how they did in the National Lottery or having a quick smoke?
- The BOWL that's passed round halfway through.
Is it for helping yourself to some small change for the parking meter that's about to run out?
- The family service talk.
Who's it aimed at? Do these adults always listen to kidstuff?

And lastly...

How much do you want these male contacts in your church to come to know the Lord? Would having more (keen, motivated, enthusiastic) men around be a bit threatening for other old timers?

Keeping men

Study your church membership list, and create two tables, one for the present day and one for 10 years ago. Divide each into male and female, and ages categories, to look something like this:

Age group	Male	Female
20s		
30s		
40s		
50s		
60s		
70s+		
TOTAL		

Proportionally do you have more men in the church now, or less? Has the age grouping in which these men have been allocated altered? What does this tell?

As you pray for those overseas, missionaries and nationals. Also remember those at home and in your congregation who are facing crises. Remember men and women both in the world of work, and unemployment, where they can be facing untold pressures, and life is cut-throat and stressful.

You and the male link missionary

Next time you write ask him if there's any particular pressures or problems that occur because of something in the (probably male dominated) national culture. This may mean things are even worse for his wife! Whatever the answer pray for them!

Fact

The percentage of people attending church was:

1979	45% men	55% women
1989	42% men	58% women

Source: Marc Europe

"There is evidence to suggest that as the proportion of women in a church increases so it becomes more difficult for the uncommitted man to start attending that church." Derek Cook

ACTION card



WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Worldwide women are gradually having their eyes opened and gaining a real sense of achievement in doing something that the vast majority of us take for granted: learning to read and write.

Katie Norris, BMS missionary in Nepal, works with the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) helping women by opening their eyes to a whole new world by setting up literacy projects and helping local people to teach their own literacy classes in their villages.

These local people are called facilitators and they receive their training at the nearest UMN project centre. Classes are usually free but those attending are expected to contribute a small sum (about 3p) which goes into a fund to be used when a need arises. Each class is supplied by the UMN project with a blackboard, chalk, a set of literacy books for each class member and a kerosene lamp.

It's difficult to imagine what it must feel like to be able to write your own name instead of putting a thumb print when a signature is required. And then the door is opened to being able to read simple documents, and then more - health and hygiene leaflets, help with finance schemes, instructions on seed packets and ultimately being able to read God's Word.

Encourage Katie in what she's doing, by sending this month's card to her. Or write a simple message to the women in Nepal involved in gaining self esteem through literacy projects by writing c/o Katie. The address is: PO Box 126, Kathmandu, Nepal.

LETTERS

I was sad to read the letter from your unnamed correspondent who had attended Walthamstow Hall sixty years ago and been bitterly unhappy. I suppose some children were disturbed by the experience of being uprooted from their missionary families, and the régime, including the medical treatment for ringworm, would certainly seem harsh to modern eyes.

Nonetheless, many old girls of the era did find the school a source of strength and have happy, affectionate memories of it as their home. They prove it by keeping in close touch and returning often, and I should like to extend, through you, a warm invitation to that unhappy Old Girl to come and visit us and perhaps exorcise her nightmares.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S J Lang Headmistress

TAKE 2

Discovering stre

"There is no way we'll

Aren't those famous, well-used bits of the Bible excellent! You know, the bits you've heard so often that, heaven forbid, you may even know off by heart.

And yet this familiarity leads to apathy. 1 Cor 2:10 says: "That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

But you don't actually expect me to believe that. Come on!

It was September 1995, and the four of us landed in Trinidad, our minds awash with ideas and preconceptions. In truth, we weren't all that daunted. Trinidad is hardly a mission field unless your idea of mission is reaching bikini clad models eating Bounty bars.

The idea of front line mission work had seemed a bit too daunting and we breathed a sigh of relief at having drawn the easy number in Trinidad.

So it was with an air of naive self-assurance that we fumbled our way through customs. But it was about this stage that the hazy

dream of silver sands and clear blue seas began to fade, to be replaced by an alarming reality.

Trinidad is the only Caribbean island not to have followed the path of tourism.

The oil industry dominates its economy. Beautiful beaches are sometimes spoiled by oily water.

Despite this industry, providing affluence for a few, one in four Trinis remain jobless. Children who fail an exam at the end of primary school are simply unable to attend high school.

Like the rest of the Caribbean, a serious drug problem has led to a violent society, giving Trinidad one of the highest murder rates in the world. Poverty is widespread with one-fifth of the country living below the UN's poverty line.

Hardly paradise! Still, that needn't affect us.

Our arrival in Trinidad was heralded by a crescendo of disinterest. No hero's welcome or packed itinerary!

David and Daryl found

themselves living in the spare room of an old people's home. Old people's homes in Trinidad are not the well run, hygienic establishments found in Britain and the boys had to live with the discomfort and illness of elderly people.

By the third week: "There is no way we'll cope," was the thought on our minds. "How on earth is God going to use us here?"

Then there was an amazing turn-around.

The realisation dawned on us that we actually had everything we needed. Once we had swallowed our pride, the old people's home became, well, home. The nurses spoiled us and the old people loved the company of strange foreigners. And when the time came for the whole team to move to an apartment, it was with great sadness.

But there was still no work, and no real promise of any. We fought against the obvious solution to this dilemma – that we should initiate work ourselves – for as long as possible.

A week later, after effort

inspired more out of hollow bravado than anything else, we found our weeks jam-packed with work. People were in desperate need of help and very enthusiastic to have our services. David and Anna worked each day in Cowen Hamilton High School teaching history and drama respectively. Daryl and Angela founded a remedial class in the nearby primary school.

At the weekends, Sundays were spent travelling to various Baptist churches in Trinidad, leading services. Friday and Saturday evenings were used to put on youth nights.

Almost overnight we had gone from having nothing to do to being very busy.

But volunteering our services to all and sundry brought its own feelings of inadequacy. What did we know about teaching, preaching or drama? People spend years learning to do these jobs. We hadn't anticipated being thrown in at the deep end like this.

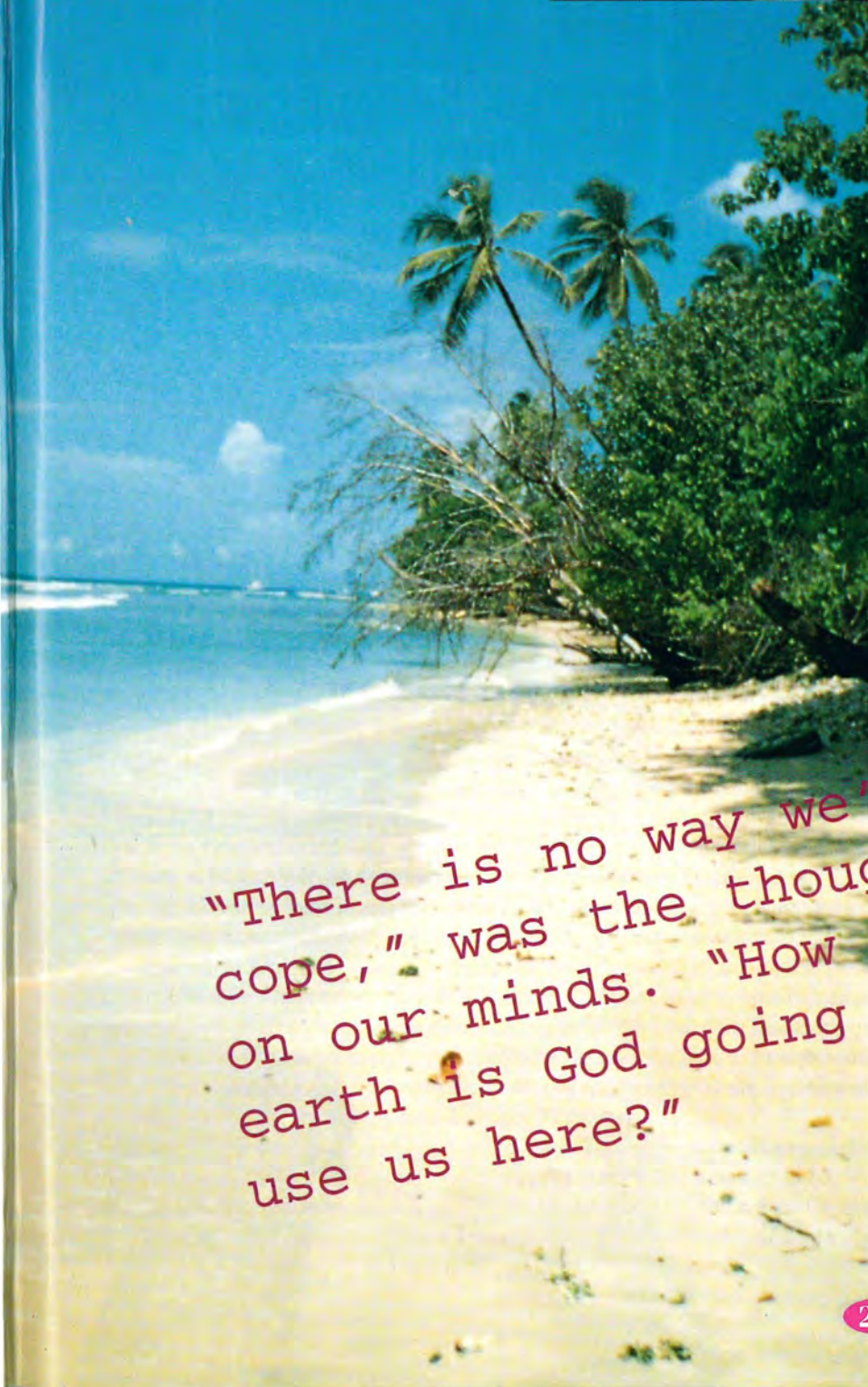
A wonderful and amazing thing happened. God worked.

Not only did we cope with teaching but we were able to start a Youth for



Strength in weakness

cope"



"There is no way we'll cope," was the thought on our minds. "How on earth is God going to use us here?"

Christ group which grew to 60 in number, and through which children were saved.

Children who couldn't read previously, learned.

Youths, bored at church, were encouraged to see that church could be fun and challenging.

Sermons were preached, often with no notice, and somehow people were touched.

Friends were made and bridges built. God worked through four inadequate and weak individuals.

Aren't those famous, well-used bits of the Bible excellent? "For when I am weak, then I am strong." What an outrageous claim. Yet the bizarre thing is that it is completely true.

If familiarity has bred apathy and doubt in you, then just ask four weak, incapable young people who spent six months in Trinidad and they'll persuade you to reconsider.

One thing, though, we never did find that Bounty bar model. What do you mean "that's not mission work?" Don't be so short-sighted!

The BMS 28:19 Trinidad Action Team –
Daryl Milford, Anna Wallace, David Young,
Angela Richardson.

prayer focus

A regular update from BMS colleagues around the world compiled by **Sam Gibson**

Asia



Grace Penny
NEPAL

KISC, the Kathmandu International Study Centre, provides education for young people from UMN (United Mission to Nepal) and INF (International Nepal Fellowship) families.

Grace teaches Geography and P.E. at KISC and is involved in other youth work out of school hours.

The new school year started in September along with a new principal, Gerald Harley, from New Zealand. While Gerald is settling in well, staffing the school is a constant struggle and new staff are required for next year.

Please pray:

- for Gerald, Grace and all KISC staff in this new academic year
- for new teaching staff to come forward for service next year



Carole Whitmee
INDIA

Carole works at a girl's hostel in Balangir in the East of India. The hostel has recently taken in fifteen new girls to replace those of an age to leave. The girls are given a formal education, many taking High School Certificate examinations and some going on to further education and nursing courses.

In July, Daud Sagar, a Christian lecturer was arrested and thrown into jail for 43 days before being released on bail; he had been acting as Chief Examiner for some college exams during the summer. Mistakes had been made in the marking of the exams and Daud, the assistant examiner and a scrutiner were charged with conspiracy. Daud has many supporters and there is no proof to support the case, which is pending in the High Court.

It is well known that the others involved in this case are very anti-Christian but thank God, whilst in

nepal



Andrew and Michelle Furber

The Furbers have been in Tansen for just under a year. Andrew is enjoying his job as a medical officer at Palpa Community Health and Development Programme (CHDP), supervising training courses for local health workers and also in the mission hospital in Tansen. Andrew's work involves travelling around the Palpa district mainly visiting government health posts.

Over the last few months, he and Michelle have been getting to know people in Tansen a little better and are making Nepalese and expatriate friends, although with people always coming and going, losing and making new friends can take its toll.

Michelle is teaching English to three Nepalis and one Japanese lady. She receives constant requests for these classes and finds it difficult to know who to take on and who to refuse. Michelle ran a Sunday school training day for teachers at the Nepali church she and Andrew attend, and this was well received. She is also a supply teacher in a school for missionaries' children and is busy doing design work for a Tansen cross-stitch group, set up for local women to generate income for themselves.

Please pray:

- few Nepali doctors stay long at Tansen hospital with more lucrative offers elsewhere. There is a shortage and the hospital is looking for volunteers.
- wisdom for Michelle in allocating places on her English course.

Balangir jail, Daud says he became very much more aware of the plight of the other prisoners and through him, the Christian community are becoming more aware of ways in which they can help these people.

Please pray:

- for the hostel girls and staff working long hours

- that justice be done in Daud's case and that any malicious accusations be brought into the light
- that God would use this case to raise up a ministry to those in prison
- safety for Carole as she travels to and from Vellore with various girls to take tests, attend interviews and place applications for nursing courses



Katie Norris
NEPAL

Katie began her first term of service in Nepal in April this year. She is based in Jumla but works with the Karnali Community Skill Training (KCST) extension office, a five hour walk away.

Recently, Katie has been involved in a programme to enable local people to teach literacy classes to 8–14 year olds in their own villages.

Most children do not have time to attend nearby schools as they need to work in the fields and graze cattle.

The classes teach children to read, write, simple maths and about health care and other common life issues, such as the disadvantages of child marriage.

Jumla is thought of by outsiders as being a remote, backward and very poor area. It is hoped that these classes

and other community development initiatives will help the people to develop a more positive image for themselves and see that change does not have to come from outside aid but is something they can work towards for themselves.

Please pray:

- after living in a close knit village community, Katie has found it more difficult to get to know people in Jumla, pray she makes good friends quickly
- for safety and speed as Katie travels by plane and on foot

Europe



Paul and Elisabeth Towlson

ALBANIA

Paul and Elisabeth who have been in Albania since April 1995, are completing language

study and moving more into pastoral ministry. Much of Paul's time is taken up with the Albanian Bible Institute (ABI) which began teaching on 30 September.

This is a school for training church leaders and is a joint venture between several missions and churches.

ABI began with 15 students and Paul is involved in their training. Elisabeth is very busy looking after their four children aged 9, 7, 6 and 2, a hard enough job for anyone but made more difficult as everyday jobs are not straight forward in Albania.

Even the shopping involves visits to many different stalls and tiny shops and the condition of the roads does not make use of a buggy easy.

The advantage of slow and frequent shopping trips however is that Elisabeth is able to meet many people and build relationships with locals.

The language is still difficult and while Elisabeth can communicate adequately,

she strives to be more accurate. For the past year, Elisabeth has been running a mums' and toddlers' group.

This will now be taken over by another missionary while Elisabeth continues to develop a small playgroup set up with some other parents.

This provides an excellent opportunity for outreach among embassy and aid agency staff as well as being a real benefit for Paul and Elisabeth's son, Phillip, who is able to mix with other children his own age.

Please pray:

- for staff and students settling into the first term at ABI
- for practical arrangements, ABI moved into its building just a few weeks before the beginning of the term
- for progress with the language – Elisabeth does not receive formal teaching
- for friendships and conversations
- for guidance on church involvement and future work

WORLDWIDE

BMS 28:19 Action Teams

Thirty two young people in eight teams are now several weeks into their assignments in the UK, Jamaica, Brazil, Thailand, Nepal, Portugal, Malta and Zimbabwe. Please pray for them as they settle in and begin work. Most are homesick and some have new languages to learn.

Please pray for each team.

- James, Polly, Dilshan and Kimia working with BMS in the UK on the Get Real youth roadshow.
- Steven, Jo, Ruth and Matt with the Jamaica Baptist Union on rural projects in St Mary's and Hanover.
- Esther, Catherine, Sarah-Jo and Laura working alongside BMS missionaries David and Cath Meikle in the favelas of Sao Paulo.
- Leigh, Ellen, Jennie and Sarah with Jacqui Wells in Thailand working with the Karen hill tribe people and at the New Life Centre for girls in danger.
- Chris, Ed, Emma and Helen in Nepal helping United Mission to Nepal (UMN) with church work, teaching English and children's conference programmes.
- Liz, David, James and Charlotte in Portugal supporting the Baptist church in Portimao in its youth outreach.
- Darrel, Mhairi, Catherine and Simon involved in evangelism and open air work across the island of Malta.
- Alex, Fiona, Emma and David working with the churches of the National Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe.

Albania

prayer *focus*



America



Gerry and Johan Myhill

BRAZIL

The Myhills have a boat ministry amongst the island communities in the Paranagua Bay and isolated coastal villages in southern Brazil. Gerry is building a small house on the island of Ilha Rasa where he can store his things, make a drink, have a shower and sleep in comfort when travelling around. In addition to a bathroom for himself, he also plans to build two extra toilet units for the use of the church in the hope that it will encourage people in the community to copy the idea for themselves. Hygiene and toilet facilities are not a high priority for the island people. Verci, the young man who lost his wife Mairleia in an electrical storm on the island as reported in June, is considering remarrying. His future second wife Teresinha recently became a Christian and has asked for baptism.

Please pray:

- that Gerry's house becomes a useful resource for the church and encourages people to see the importance of hygiene
- for Verci, his young son and possible new wife. Thank

God that this young man has been able to pick up the pieces and get on with his life after the loss of Mairleia



Colin and Marcia Pavitt

BRAZIL

Colin and Marcia work with a church planting and social project in Eldorado do Sol in the south of Brazil. They have found starting a new church very hard work but are also thrilled to see God working in people's lives. In June they baptised the first four new members into the church, increasing membership to ten, and several more people look set to join this year. The church has one meeting on a Sunday evening and most weeks, a music group from its mother church lead worship. The congregation is looking for someone in Eldorado who can meet their musical needs. A Tuesday evening meeting, meant to be an adult prayer and Bible study, is usually also attended by around 30 children. Some people in the mother church feel this is not right but the children love going and many are believing in Jesus and having their lives changed. At a holiday club held in July, 25 children accepted Jesus into their lives and most are now attending church regularly. A further

programme the Pavitts run is individual Bible studies presenting the Gospel to people in their own homes, over a period of seven weeks. During the third lesson, people are asked to make a decision to accept faith in Jesus or not and, thank God, the Pavitts have found that most people accept. A team of 25 Americans arrived in September to build 12 small houses on land purchased earlier in the year for a church building. The church agreed to build these houses as part of the deal for purchasing the land. The main church building is not yet complete making services difficult due the need to move around and dust etc.

Please pray:

- for continued growth in membership of this new church
- for someone who lives in Eldorado to come forward to play music
- thank God for the children whose lives are being touched. Pray for a suitable ministry and people to support the children as they get to know more about their new found faith.
- for the building work
- for the Pavitt family. Colin and Marcia are often very tired as they have so much work to do. Pray God would add and raise people up within the church to carry new ministries forward.



Mark and Suzana Greenwood

BRAZIL

The Greenwoods were reminded of God's love and protection over them one night just before June. Suzana got into their car to park it in the garage and a gunman got in beside her. Obeying his orders she got out and he drove off. At that moment, Suzana says she felt the Lord's protection most strongly and the next day the car was found safely abandoned for the Greenwoods to collect.

Please pray:

- for God's continued protection of the Greenwoods and all missionary personnel
- for strength and extra co-workers as the Greenwoods have felt burdened with a great deal of work recently





Mike and Jean Gardiner

BRAZIL

After two years of temporary principals, a long term leader has been found for the Cuiaba Baptist Seminary at which Mike is a Director. Pastor Walter comes from the church in Mirassol D'Oesta, 200 miles from Cuiaba and his wife, who has a theology degree, is also keen to be involved in teaching at the Seminary. Mike has handed over several of the jobs he was doing at the Seminary to Professor Denise Alves who took over as Academic Dean in August. She teaches Study Methods at the Seminary, supervises the final year dissertations and is currently working on an expansion of the curriculum for 1997 to include the option of specialising in Religious Education. Mike continues with finance, employee relations and general management as well as being heavily involved in launching a second leadership course. The first saw 28 lay people from the Cuiaba churches receiving diplomas after completing the ten week course. Beside its basic degree students, the Seminary this year has been able to give basic training in

Christian service to 57 members of 15 of the 17 Cuiaba Baptist churches. Jean is very involved in counselling students with their problems which include health (of students and their families), financial difficulties and marital stress. The couple fly back to the UK next month on Home Assignment.

Please pray:

- for Pastor Walter and Denise Alves, that they settle quickly to their new roles leading the Seminary forward
- for Mike as he gets used to a slightly altered role
- a safe journey for Mike and Jean back to the UK and for a refreshing time on Home Assignment

BRAZIL



Stan and Maureen Porter

A good missionary needs to be able to cope with the unexpected. That's why, when the Porters arrived at Jardim Olinda Pre-school to find a wake in full swing, they were not overtly worried!

No one knew how the people had managed to get in to the building and set the classroom out as a chapel of rest, but the body, surrounded by candles and weeping family, was there for the next few hours. One of the children was temporarily lost but soon located again underneath the coffin (it was resting on chairs). He wanted to know who, what and why about the dead lady!

Maureen has the task of overseeing this favela school, initially set up by BMS missionary Stuart Christine and now run by Compassion International. Ten pre-schools operate around the city of Sao Paulo. BMS nurse Mary Parsons recently visited the schools and some families to establish a network of health workers from some of the Baptist churches in the hope of helping teachers and parents learn more about health education, nutrition, how to recognise eye, teeth and skin problems and if a child is underweight.

- it is planned that the children at Jardim Olinda be able to progress into 'proper' school on the same site, pray for this project
- that the health worker project meets its ambitious aims
- for the education of the children to enable them to lead a better and healthier life than their present situation allows
- health and safety in travel for Stan and Maureen

Arrivals

Neil and Rosalie Hall from Kathmandu
Mike and Jean Gardiner from Cuiabá
Lee and Evelyn Messeder from Dourados
Simon and Karen Collins from Portugal
Stephen and Elizabeth Allford from Kinshasa

Departures

Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins to Bangui

Visits

David Martin to Sri Lanka and India
John Passmore to Italy
Derek Rumbol to Zaire and South Africa
Phil Hindle to Zaire
Delyth Wyn Davies to Zaire

Legacies

From July to September

We are grateful for the support of those who remember the work of the gospel in their wills and we give thanks to God for the following bequests

	£
Amies, Mrs B M	1,000.00
Barnes, Miss Ethel M	500.00
Belton, Miss E	59,124.23
Berry, Doris G	1,000.00
Calder, Mrs C	1,506.00
Coffey, Mrs Margaret E	500.00
Cook, Mrs Dorothy M	28,333.34
Emery, Mrs Kathleen	250.00
Gadge, Miss Constance M	500.00
Giblin, Elizabeth E M	3,939.50
Harmer, Miss	24,776.81
Hewett, Mrs A O	250.00
Ims, Miss Edith C	4,853.45
Isles, Emily B	886.70
Larney, Miss Mary G	3,750.00
Ledgard, Mr John S	408.72
Neale, Mrs G E	50.00
Peacock, Miss V M	500.00
Rigg, Mrs G M	10,000.00
Rowe, Gladys A L	3,180.54
Skinner, Miss Vera A M	3,551.84
Spinney, Mr Len	2,506.00
Stock, Miss Alvira M	1,500.00
Tope, Miss Winifred A	1,000.00
Veary, Kathleen F	1,000.00
Warren, Mrs Olwen B	500.00
Warren, Mrs Muriel A	250.00
Weller, Miss Audrey M	2,208.00
Yates, J A	11,559.28
TOTAL	£169,384.41

For supporters who are considering bequests to the BMS, we can supply a helpful information leaflet, Making a Will.

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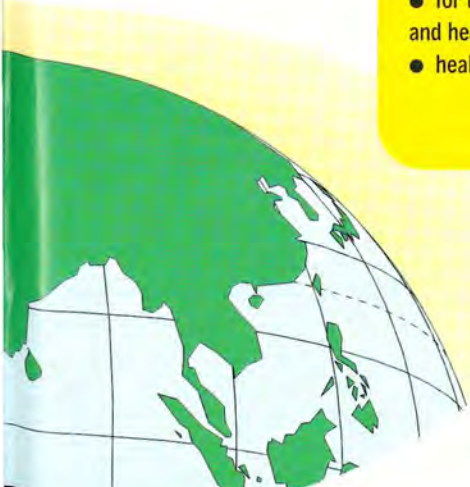
The date 31 December 1996 to 2 January 1997

The place Atholl Centre, Pitlochry, Perthshire

The cost £48 full board

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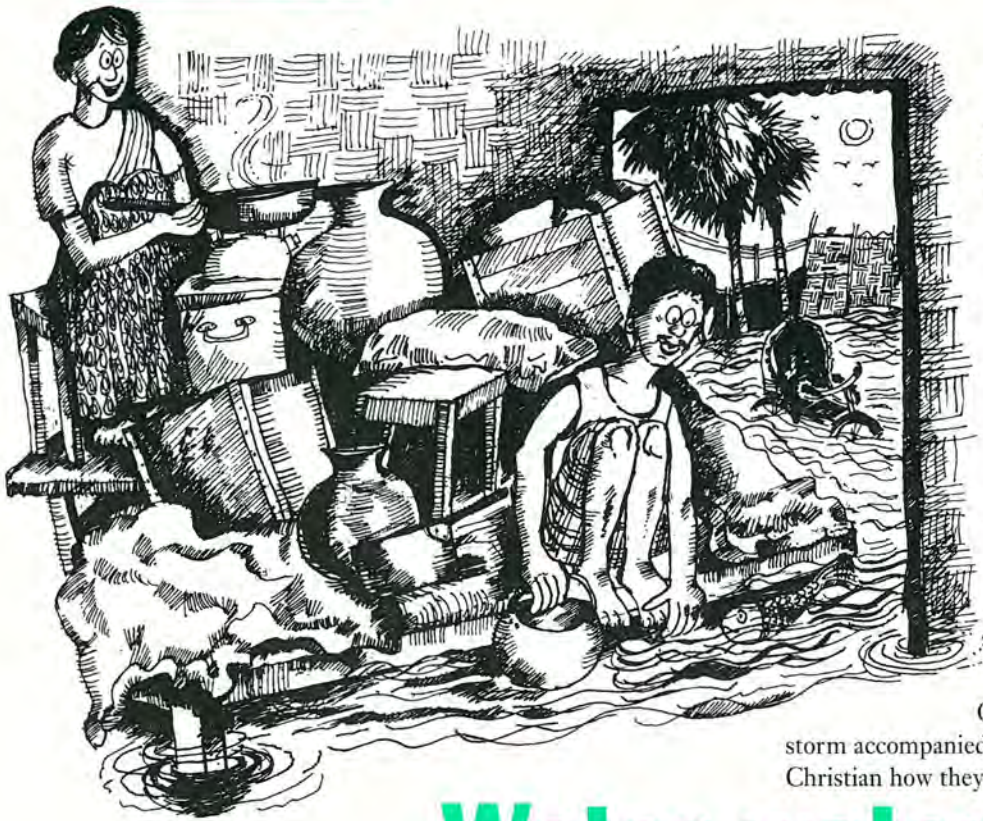


ILLUSTRATION: SARAH PRENTICE

only a few feet above sea level. Although cities and towns are growing, most of the 100 million plus people live in villages, in houses with walls made either of mud or woven bamboo.

The walls are put on an earth plinth to raise them above ground level. When excavating the mud for the foundation, a hole is formed and this then fills with rain to become a pond. Hence there are ponds in every village and often outside every large house. As these ponds are often the only source of water for a large area they get used for all purposes for which water is required – cooking, washing clothes, bathing, (people and buffalo) sometimes drinking in the dry season – and are also used for breeding fish, that being a favourite ingredient in curry to accompany the rice.

One morning, after a particularly potent storm accompanied by hours of stair rod rain, I asked a local Christian how they had fared. Terrible, they said with a broad

Water water everywhere

John Passmore takes a sideways view

Lying in my bed, secure and warm, listening to the rain hitting the roof and filling the water butts while the wind roars and the lightning illuminates the room has to be one of my most satisfying experiences. Lying in my tent recently, with the storm raging, was not so comfortable.

A good job we'd taken the precaution of putting it up at home before the holiday to apply a coat of proofer. Would the seams hold out and the pegs? After all they were only pushed into sand. Everything felt damp and with the noise of flapping canvas there was no chance of sleep. Added to that I was saturated, having been out to check the pegs and the channel, dug around the tent to carry away surface water and divert it from flooding the plot lower down the slope! Still, hopefully, tomorrow the sun will shine and everything can be dried out.

That thunder storm in France lasted all night and the wind and rain continued through the next day. The tropical storms we experienced in Bangladesh sometimes went on for days and the monsoon brings rain every day for months on end. The rain and floods though are needed and without them the rice crop could not be grown.

Though the floods in the fields were necessary, too much rain often submerged whole areas – fields, homes and roads under feet of water. After the storm on the campsite some tents were so badly damaged, the folk had to leave but at least they had a home to go to. Tropical storms frequently flatten or flood people's homes leaving them nowhere to go.

The vast majority of Bangladesh is a flat river delta consisting of earth and sand with no rocks, the whole being

grin. How so I enquired? Well, the whole area in which they lived had been flooded and it was so deep it had come up over the house plinth. They had to pile all their possessions on the bed to keep them out of the flood water. The bed itself was a sturdy wood construction with its feet on bricks so they were safe, if marooned, on their own island. They had not been able to get to the market to buy anything for supper so it was going to be just rice. This was cooked on a kerosene stove also balanced on the bed.

I was getting the sorry picture but it didn't explain the grin. As the rice bubbled away and they lamented their plight with the water swirling in the front door, and out through the loosely woven bamboo walls they noticed a disturbance in the flow and there in their house, just about to go under the bed, was a large fish! Having escaped from its pond and enjoyed a short lived freedom it was now on its way to being a free meal for the family. No wonder they were smiling.

They then went on to explain how the flood really helped the poorer people. At first I couldn't see how this could be so but the explanation made sense. "You see," they said, "it's only the rich people who can afford to stock their ponds with good fish fry, but when the flood comes everybody's ponds are submerged. All the fish escape. Then when the flood subsides the fish end up in a different pond, usually someone else's, and there is a much fairer distribution. So the poor man gets the fish from the rich man's pond!"

John Passmore, BMS Europe Representative, was a missionary in Bangladesh for 10 years.

waves

WHO'S IN THE REAL WORLD?

How does our culture treat men and is this treatment changing?

I have observed how in the world of advertising men are gradually taking over the domestic scene. Two adverts have in particular caught my eye.

Many of you will have seen the cheery chap who stalks the streets of suburbia clutching a huge box of washing powder. He knocks on the door of a house hoping to change the life of the woman who lives there. I would never dream of letting him in, but fortunately he has knocked on the door of a more charitable woman who not only allows him to enter but makes him a coffee to drink while she washes the family's whites. The cheery chap is proved right. Her whites are much brighter than before. Her life will never be the same again.

What do you make of the man in the second advertisement who pretends to love and care for his wife while all the time withholding the secret of easily cleaned baths and floors? When she cleans she has to get down on her knees and scrub. She probably makes regular

visits to the osteopath. He withholds this secret knowledge because her gratitude and admiration are far too useful and flattering.

Why don't these women know better?

How do these media men know the secret of whiter whites and gleaming floors?

Well they have more time to watch television!

Women are far too busy out in the real world running hospital coffee shops, caring for sick neighbours, shopping for the elderly, looking after children, running businesses, banks, schools, organising churches, working

as missionary secretaries, etc, etc.

Is our culture changing the way it treats men? Not really. Who shapes culture? Who shapes the media?

The church, like the world at large, still relies on the good service, good will and goodness of women who live out their faith in love for God and service to others. Many men in our churches honour and respect the women who worship with them. Sadly, there are still those who do not: those who patronise women believing, like the media men, that they know best.

Thank God for counter-culture men – men who recognise the advantages they receive in our culture and who long for this to change. Thank God for those men in our churches and in society who will speak out to challenge and correct the way culture has treated them and who, in doing so, are becoming whole people themselves.

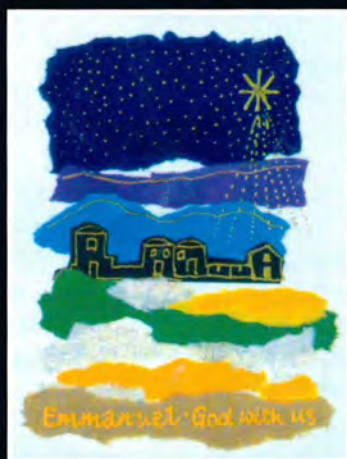


The Revd Vivienne Lassetter is minister at Sion Baptist Church, Burnley Lanc., and is married to Greg.

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