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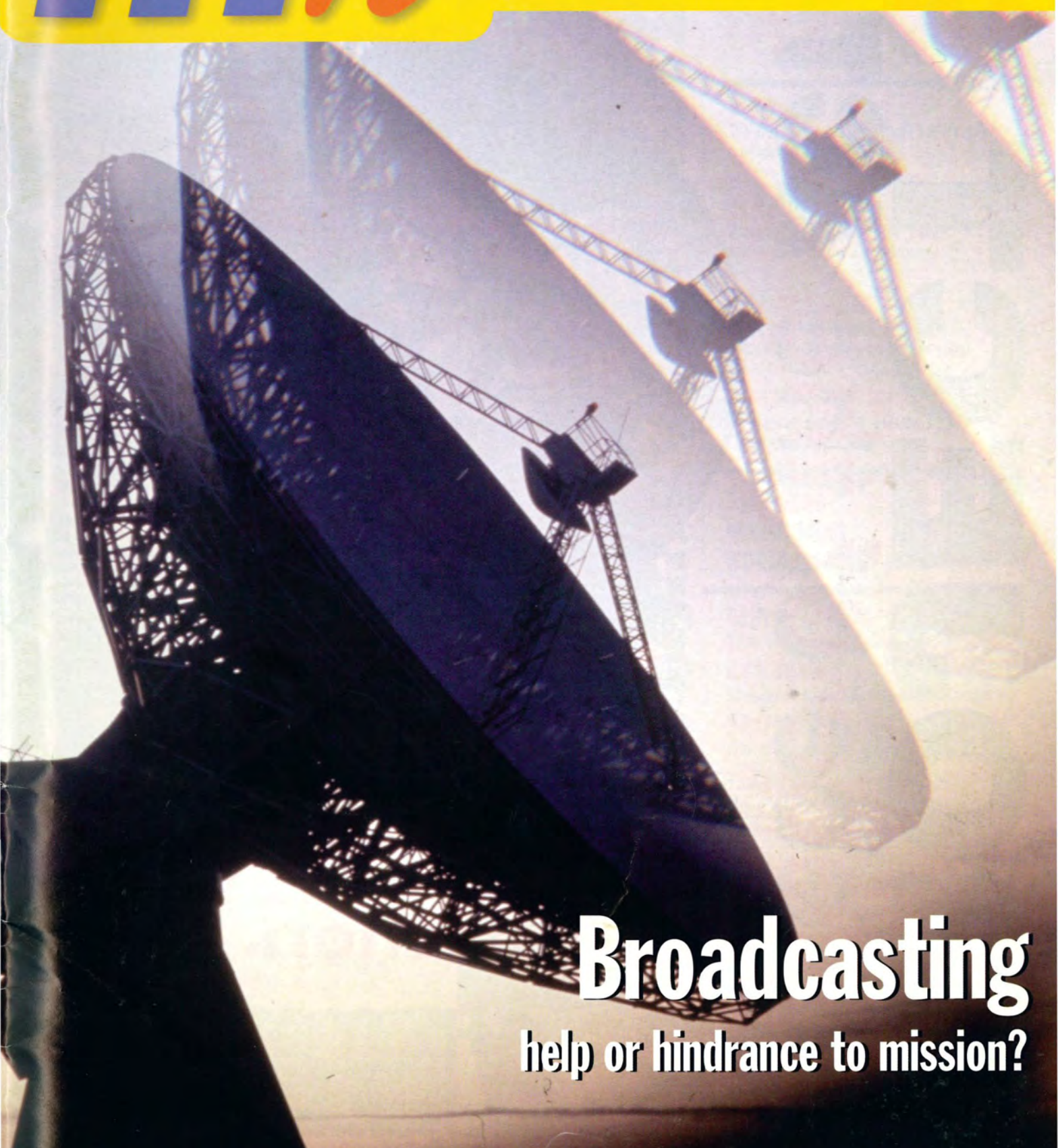
m*W*

News around the world

Focus on Kimpese

Action teams abroad

international



Broadcasting

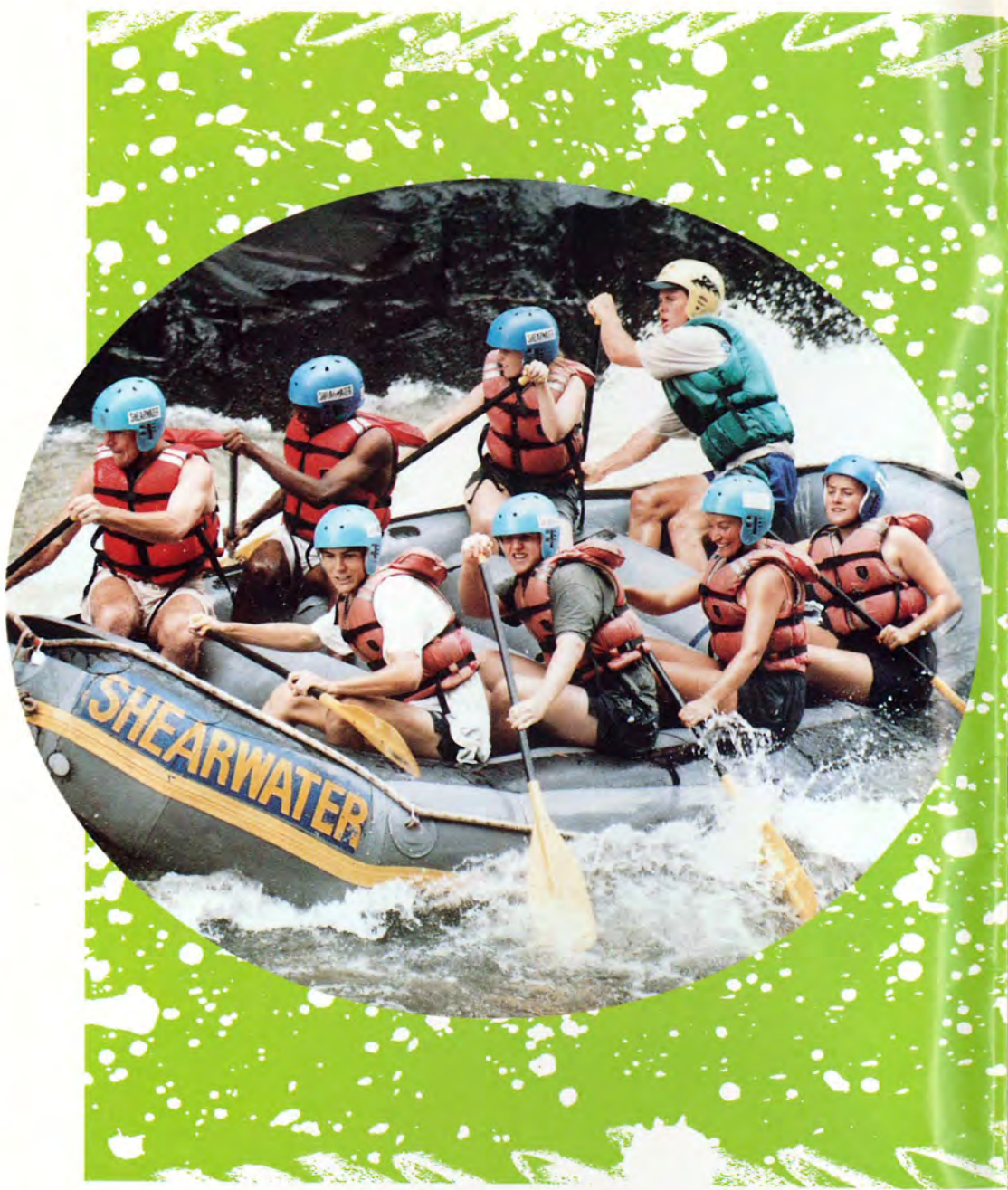
help or hindrance to mission?

Robert Stacey - Pastor abroad - visits S. America

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Resourcing young people in active front line mission
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PROJECT 97 raising money for
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ISSUE - BROADCASTING

contents

JAN KENDALL



Children today in the West are growing up very technologically aware, with TVs carrying a multiplicity of stations, personal stereos, computers - at home and at school, - e-mail, and the Internet.

It's a joke in some households that if you want to programme the video, you ask the kids to do it!

But TVs, PCs and everything else are essentially neutral. Like money, scientific knowledge or medical research, they can be used for good or bad.

It's no good burying our heads in the sand: all this electronic and IT gadgetry is here to stay, and what our offices, schools, shops, factories, homes and even churches will look like in this regard in say, ten years time, may be a surprise even for those who are in touch with the latest technology.

There is talk of the potential of using the latest means for spreading the gospel, but unless you're a computer whiz or radio ham, the scope for actually DOING anything seems a bit limited.

Christian life is gradually being affected by IT, from church magazines produced using desktop publishing software, to phone links during services to missionaries overseas, and wider afield to Christian TV programmes and Christian radio stations.

Paul's words in 2 Cor 10:5 to 'take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ' could be the motivation to create opportunities and build bridges in our communities, to put in place whatever things are right, pure, lovely and worthy of praise. We must aim to give people the option of filling their minds with good things!

This issue of *mb* brings to you reports of Christians who are doing just that. We must do all we can to encourage them, and others like them, in their work for the Lord.

Jan

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COVER IMAGE
GOONHILLY EARTHSTATION
PHOTO: BT CORPORATE PICTURE LIBRARY: A BT PHOTOGRAPH



FEATURES

4

SAT-7

Broadcasting partnership

A dynamic new TV service

6

GEMS ON TOAST

Local radio and you

Jeff Bonser issues a challenge

8

NEW TECHNOLOGY

- present and future

John Wheatley and what it's all about

10

CLOCKWORK RADIO

Where big is beautiful

Old principles put to good use

NEWS

12

BMS NEWS

14

WORLD NEWS

17

WORLD MISSION LINK

REGULARS

18

CENTRE SPREAD

Terry and Barbara Page

20

OUR TOWN

Kimpele, Democratic Republic of Congo

26

PASTORS ABROAD

Robert Stacey visits South America

28

TAKE TWO

Mission file of facts, figures and background

30

ACTION TEAMS

They're out at the sharp end

32

MISSIONARY DIGEST

Prayer points to support BMS colleagues

35

JOHN PASSMORE

The last word

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NEXT ISSUE SEPT-OCT

Reverse flow mission

When the Spirit moves back to front!



Samir is 43 years old. He was born in Morocco, but now lives in Hamburg. His most treasured possessions in his small apartment are his television, two video recorders, and satellite receiver. These stand in his living room area, housed in a bookcase. In the adjoining kitchen, by the only window, there is an 85cm brown satellite dish. This is connected to a large concrete brick on the floor by means of a metal rod. In front of the brick Samir has written the names of the various satellites the dish can receive on pieces of tape at the relevant positions: Astra on 19.2 degrees East, Eutelsat 7 degrees East, Eutelsat 10 degrees East, Eutelsat and Hot Bird 13 degrees East, and Eutelsat 16 degrees East. To enable Samir to tune in accurately, he must move the concrete brick to what he thinks is the required position, and hurry to his living room to check his television. If he wants to change satellites he must return to his kitchen and move his brick to the left or the right.



SAT-7 is a dynamic new television service, using satellites, and serving the Christian community primarily in the Middle East and North Africa. A Partnership of 28 organisations, including BMS, now help to promote this unique and exciting project.

SAT-7 began weekly transmissions on 31 May 1996, using the satellite Eutelsat 2F3. Broadcasts, at this point, were just two hours a week, in Arabic, on a Friday, from 12.30 to 14.30 Central European Time. The area covered by the transmission (the 'footprint') includes most of Europe, the tip of North Africa and parts of the Middle East.

At the end of April 1997 SAT-7 began broadcasting the same programmes at the same times on another satellite system, PanAmSat 4, whose 'footprint' covers North West Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia.

Viewers very often first find the SAT-7 service by browsing through the channels. For new viewers in the Gulf, who tune in to the PanAmSat4 satellite, it may take a while for them to locate the channel as most local media does not carry information about a Christian satellite station.

Programmes are both culturally sensitive and appropriate for the receiving countries, at the same time giving an attractive alternative to local broadcasts and western channels.

By the spring of 1998 SAT-7 hopes to broadcast for several more hours per week both in Arabic and other languages, and by 2000 it would like to be outputting programmes for 24 hours a week, in a variety of languages, using a digital channel.

It is estimated that 99.9 per cent of homes in some Arab countries now have television, and more than half of these have two or more sets. Although satellite dishes were banned in some countries some years ago, it is reckoned that more than 50 per cent of all homes in such countries have a dish or dishes.

Elsewhere more than 90 per cent of the population own televisions, including those living in the poorest of slums, who will have a black and white set, at least. A television set is a priority purchase for any family, and for most, it is their only source of

information and entertainment.

An increasing number of people covered by the 'footprints' have access to Arab, European and Asian satellite TV services. For some living in Middle Eastern cities there is the choice of as many as 80 different channels. Whilst many are in Arabic, only SAT-7 carries any Christian programming. It is estimated that over 100 million people in the Middle East will have access to

SAT-7

satellite TV by the year 2000.

And how has SAT-7 been received? The very first person to call the SAT-7 Cyprus office when broadcasting commenced simply said "Mish maoul", translated "This is unbelievable!" That has continued to be the response from much of the audience, who are delighted to find an Arabic-language Christian TV service available to them!

Many write or phone their appreciation of the programmes. For example a lady from a Protestant church in Syria telephoned SAT-7's Cyprus office, literally in tears, to say how much the weekly programmes meant to her and her church. Her pastor records the

The Aims of the SAT-7 project

- 1 To sustain the scattered Christian communities and encourage them in their faith, service and witness.
- 2 To provide its audience with an opportunity to hear a presentation of the Christian message in its own language, without unnecessary foreign, cultural or political baggage.
- 3 To complement all public education and information channels with a balanced Christian world view which reflects Biblical perspectives on human life and society.

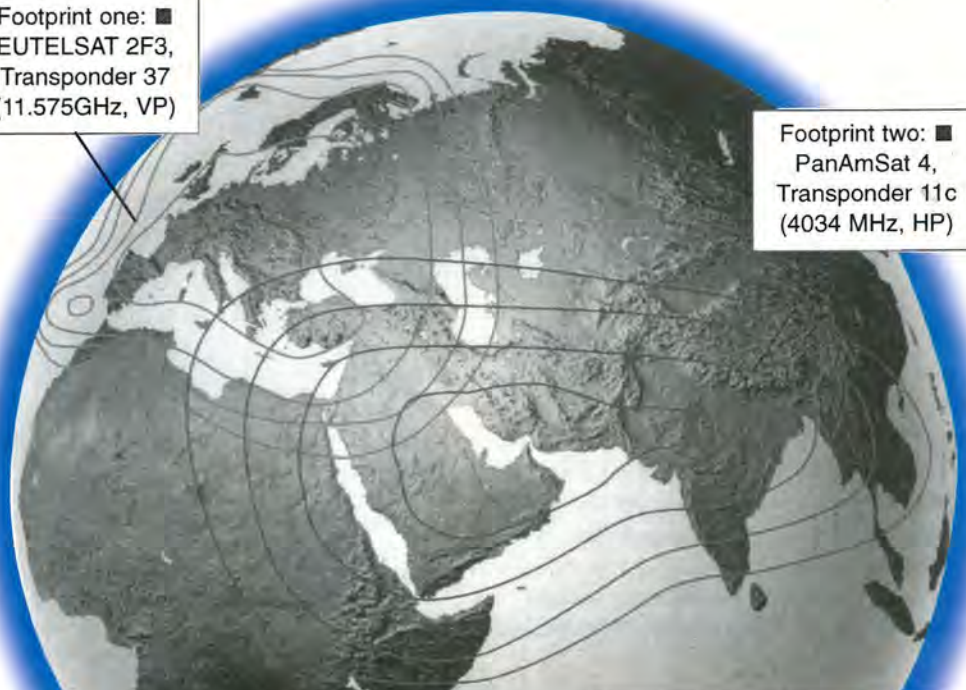
broadcasts, and then videotapes are copied around the church. She also said that local Orthodox and Armenian churches were doing the same.

The only negative responses have been from those who wish that SAT-7 broadcast for a longer period of time!

The ability to expand and extend broadcasting hours depends on the development of capacity by SAT-7 to produce programme continuity, and to strengthen its programming acquisitions department. As well as personnel and technical requirements, funding will also play a crucial part in how quickly it can move ahead, and see its vision become reality. ●

Footprint one: ■
EUTELSAT 2F3,
Transponder 37
(11.575GHz, VP)

Footprint two: ■
PanAmSat 4,
Transponder 11c
(4034 MHz, HP)



1997 Broadcasts are each Friday
starting at 12.30 hours
Central European Time (CET)

SAT-7 viewers speak out

"Thank you so much for the letter you sent - it was like a beautiful story for me - but I have not yet received the Bible I asked for, more than a month ago - I need it so much and I will give you my address once again..." Moroccan man viewer

"Me and my family and all the Christians here in Bethlehem want to thank you for your programmes. We are waiting for you to be on air 24 hours per day because you are the only channel that speaks about the truth, that Jesus is the only way to eternal life." Palestinian student

"I love your programmes but are they telling the truth? Is it true what they say, that Jesus is the Son of God? Or are these the words of deceivers? Please tell me more about Jesus!" Kuwaiti woman

"I watch your programmes with great interest every Friday. Thank you for your big efforts... I would like to co-operate with you in the spreading of your holy ideas." Algerian man viewer

"Your channel has entered my heart... my whole family loves to watch your programmes, we can hardly

wait for the broadcasts each week!" Moroccan woman

"As I write this fax, my heart is beating hard from the happiness and excitement that your channel has brought to me. This happiness feeds my soul and spirit. Give us more - you do not realise how happy we are to learn about the prophets, about God, about our Saviour and Master..." Egyptian living in Holland

"We were so happy to find SAT-7 - there has been a long need for such a channel. We hope you can increase the hours..." Lebanese refugee living in Denmark. ●

Gems on toast

Why **Jeff Bonser** gets excited about local radio



"Gems on toast" is the answer! What was the question?

Listeners to West Yorkshire's Classic Gold radio station hear children's answers and have to guess the question, which was "What does the Queen have for breakfast?"

The show which features The Big Question is provided by the Christian broadcasting organisation HCJB-UK based in Bradford. It is a live two-hour breakfast programme which happens around a real breakfast table.

"Good morning, welcome to The Full Breakfast on Classic Gold" says presenter Colin Lowther. "The answers are God, my dad and Ted Rogers. What is the question?" There's no shortage of listeners who ring in with the answer, or rather the question, which was "Who is the cleverest person in the world?"

Colin, a member of a local Baptist church, co-presents the programme with Yvonne Troy. The popular quiz is featured alongside music, interviews and news. "We have sent every church in the



TOP: Colin Lowther and Yvonne Troy present 'The Full Breakfast' show on Classic Gold
ABOVE: Jeff Bonser

Did you say something?

Ian S Rose of Soundwaves Radio looks at Christian broadcasting

Soundwaves radio

I picked up the letter and re-read... 'We're after a short article describing your insights into Christian broadcasting abroad.' 'Well', I thought, 'where do we go from here?'

From the beginning

I suppose I could start by mentioning that the oldest Christian radio station HCJB started broadcasting on Christmas Day 1931 in a sheep shed - admittedly not a particularly auspicious start. I could go on to mention that the transmitting site in Pifo, Ecuador, has more than 30 antenna systems supported by 48 towers and on average 6,000 letters a month are received from 140 countries.

Or I could talk about Trans World Radio broadcasting from eleven sites around the world in 120 languages with a staff of over 1,000.

Then again there is FEBA Radio now into its 27th year, broadcasting in 52 languages to more than 30 countries and now using clockwork radios.

I could even wax lyrical about UCB Europe who broadcast by satellite and take in a circle covering Greenland, Eastern and Western Europe, North Africa



and the whole of the British Isles.

But...

Is this what Christian broadcasting is all about? Is it just nuts and bolts, transmitters, mega watts of power, antennae or what...?

What is truth?

Certainly it is all these things but surely it is much more. It is about being God's mouth piece in a world that is bombarded with a surfeit of messages. Why should we be listened to? It is not good enough to say 'because we speak the eternal truth' for the reply is likely to be that echoed down the centuries 'What is truth?'. We must earn a hearing.

Perhaps, the best way is not a total diet of bible preaching.

Perhaps, just perhaps, when a person is

ABOVE: Ian records another programme in the soundwaves studio

existing at starvation level a programme on how to improve crop yields and farming techniques might just catch the ear of a non-committed listener more readily. Now I'm not knocking preaching. It has its place and ultimately a supreme place, but radio is about communicating to an individual, and this means we have to speak the language of that listener (in more ways than one). To the educated Hindu seeking a world perspective, a reliable unbiased news service might be the door into his life. To the young person with an interest in short-wave listening a programme about DX-ing might serve the same purpose.

Crossing the bridge

So once the listener feels comfortable with the station he will be more prepared to take seriously the Christian message contained within the programmes. Wasn't it St Paul who said he became different things to different people in order to win them for Christ, and didn't Jesus tell stories about sheep to shepherds and crops to farmers?

Not the easy route

I know I am not unique when I say that it is relatively easier to produce a 'preaching' type programme than a ear-catching interest one containing the essence of the Gospel. My experience is that it is frequently difficult to gain the support of Christians for this type of programming as they myopically fail to see it as Christian. But there again we never were promised that any work for Christ would be easy.

Now, what was it they said they wanted this article on...?

Soundwaves Radio is an outreach of the Brighton Road Baptist Church, Horsham, Sussex.

area two postage-paid reply cards to encourage them to send their news. These are read out in the show along with stories from the week's papers" said Yvonne.

There's also "The Toaster Challenge". Local people are invited to come on the show and say why they believe in God in one minute - before the toaster goes BOING!

What do the station bosses think? "It's not heavy and boring" said Programme Controller Geoff Hemming. "There's a good balance between Christian bits and

the sound of Classic Gold, and it is one of the few religious shows I'll listen to."

Around half a million people listen to the station every week - many many more than in local churches on Sunday.

Classic Gold is one of over 200 local radio stations in the UK listened to by more than 30 million people. In fact more people tune in to their local stations than listen to BBC Radio 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Live put together!

In many of the stations Christians are involved in a whole variety of ways - from producing or presenting

programmes to interviewing, researching or even making the tea. Several stations have a daily "Thought for the Day" and all of them broadcast news and information.

Make sure your church has someone who ensures your news is given to local radio stations in your area. Be alert to potential broadcasters in your congregation. If you need it, help is at hand. ●

Jeff Bonser is General Secretary of the Association of Christians in Local Broadcasting (ACCLB)

New Broadcasting Technology Blessing or Bane?

JOHN WHEATLEY
OF THE FAR EAST
BROADCASTING
COMPANY LOOKS
AT PRESENT AND
FUTURE
BROADCASTING
TECHNOLOGIES

What do you think the novelist Arthur C. Clarke and the apostle John have in common?

They each had a vision of the geostationary communications satellite, though their approaches were in stark contrast to each other!

Much has been said and written about the use of satellites for communicating the gospel, and certainly their potential is enormous. But first let us understand just what they can do. A communications satellite is a relay station in orbit, and although it can 'broadcast' television or radio programmes, its function is to relay whatever is beamed up from a ground station. Most modern satellites can carry up to 24 TV channels plus an even larger number of auxiliary audio channels (called sub-carriers) which can be used to broadcast radio programmes.

A 'geostationary' satellite is so-called because in its orbit, nearly 23,000 miles high, it turns at the same rate as the earth and therefore appears to be stationary in the sky.

In Europe at the moment, between about 100 TV channels and over 50 radio channels can be received from the popular satellites (to be increased

by another 200 TV channels on the new BSB DIGITAL satellite in 1998!). The equipment required to receive these consists of a satellite receiver (or tuner) and a dish antenna of 60-80 cm in diameter. Many of the TV channels are in other European languages and many of the English TV channels are encrypted and require a subscription to be paid in order to view them. Of the radio channels, United Christian Broadcasters operate a 24-hour service, and Transworld Radio operate a Christian channel for part of the day. None of the radio channels are encrypted.

The media world is developing and changing with increasing speed. Our motive as Christians must be to reach people in the market-place, and as that market-place changes, it is vital that we keep fully aware of developments so that we can continue to reach people as they move their viewing or listening to the new areas opening up, and so that we can plan intelligently for the future.

The changes will not happen overnight, and the speed of change will vary from one geographical area to another. For economic reasons they are taking place first in the more developed countries. More than 50 million households in Europe now have satellite TV, but in Asia and Africa only the more affluent levels of society could afford the new media. However, the ownership of TV is growing at a surprising rate in the poorer countries, and even satellite TV, possibly cable-connected, is making a growing impact.

The Potential for Satellite Radio Ministry
Radio gets a 'piggy-back ride' on satellite TV! This means that all the paraphernalia for TV (particularly the dish) is required in order to receive the radio programmes.¹





BFT CORPORATE PICTURE LIBRARY; A BFT PHOTOGRAPH

However, Digital Audio Broadcasting, or DAB, is already with us on local stations in the U.K. and elsewhere in Europe. DAB can also be satellite-delivered on an international basis, does not need a dish for reception, and offers CD-like quality!

This is the only practical replacement for international short-wave radio, but it will require a new type of radio (just as the CD required a new kind of record-player).

Therefore, receiver availability and sales in quantity (leading to low prices) will be the key to any large-scale audience to DAB. DAB car-radios for terrestrial stations and the consumer market are available now, at a price in excess of £500. The growth of DAB will be 'limited by economic rather than technical constraints'.

The Potential for Satellite TV Ministry

Ironically, the employment of the new technology for TV has overtaken radio, and it is already a practical possibility for ministry on a national, regional, or international basis. Satellite delivery has freed up TV from the rigid control governments have exercised until now.

But there are massive hurdles involved in using TV! The greatest one is the high cost and enormous skill resources inherent in the production of many hours of daily programmes appropriate to the culture of the viewers! Another is the on-going high cost of a TV channel.

Is it Morally Right to Use Such a Medium?

Because some satellite channels have been used for pornographic purposes, some Christians have questioned whether it is right to have anything to do with the use of satellite TV/radio.

I personally believe that such a question is in reality a cop-out! G.K.Chesterton wrote to parody Christians who find excuses to avoid commitment; "Let us have the pleasure of conquest without the pain of soldiers; let us sit on sofas and be a hardy race... let us have the splendour of offering ourselves without the peril of committing ourselves!"

We need to get on with it! ●

¹ Though it is possible to connect the satellite tuner to an ordinary hi-fi system, and thus listen to the satellite radio channel without switching on the TV set.

A Radio that goes like Clockwork

It has been described as an overstuffed lunch box, and weighing six pounds, it is certainly not something you would put in your pocket; but right now people in Africa are falling over themselves to own one.

It has been called "a brilliant idea." Nelson Mandela described it as "a fantastic achievement."

The clockwork radio consists of a clockwork mechanism that stores energy, activated by a winding handle, which delivers electrical power when required. This is no watch spring we are talking about, but a spring that unwound measures 30 feet long, originally designed for rewinding automatic seat belts. Every time the radio is wound up for 25 seconds, it can give 40 minutes of radio air time.

The clockwork radio is the brainchild of Trevor Baylis, a British scientist, who came up with the idea after watching a television documentary about AIDS and the difficulties incurred in sending health information in developing countries, because of erratic electricity supplies and expensive batteries.

Baylis went straight to his workshop, sure he could put to good use the principle of the old wind up gramophones, and hey presto, the clockwork radio was born.

Unfortunately Baylis's idea was not marketable, and it took him two years to find a sponsor. Now the BayGen Freeplay Radio is produced in a small factory just north of Cape Town, South Africa,

where 110 workers earning the equivalent of \$80 a week put together a radio every 30 seconds.

Just before their election Ghana wanted 30,000; it was the best way of getting the message across to the voters. It has been a big turnaround from when the big electronics companies gave the clockwork radio a thumbs down, saying "That's all very nice, but who needs it?" to now, when countries like Japan are actually importing these radios.

Its benefits are overwhelming; saving the owner somewhere between \$500 to \$1000 in battery costs over its three year life span. It is even better than having solar energy which can only be used in daylight hours. Able to receive SW, MW and FM, listeners can tune in to local and international programmes.

The radio need not have been built so big, but having it big was a great status symbol in Africa, just below owning a bike or a motorcycle!

FEBA Radio News recently reported on the potential of these radios within their reception areas; they were planning a trial in both Mozambique and the Sudan. The Baptists of Whitley Bay have sent hundreds of these radios to Ghana, with a target of 100,000 set to deliver to the people of central Ghana by the end of the century.

"It's such a simple idea" said one of the executives of BayGen Power, but the good ones always are.

Stan Crees is a member of General Committee and Liaison Officer of Operation Agri.



Mike Pilavachi



The Great Communicator

The actor/US President Ronald Reagan was called the great communicator because of the way he managed to win over the American public and be, according to the polls, the most popular American President since polling began. This, despite the fact that he was not the most intellectual or able man to have held the post for a long time.

I write soon after one of the longest British election campaigns in history when we have been bombarded with advertising both positive and negative, spin doctors have confused us and allegations of lies and "media manipulation" have been exchanged with monotonous regularity.

Faced with this, we look across the Atlantic and remember the excesses of some of the American tele-evangelists and conclude that we will keep away from all this evil. Surely if anyone deserves the title "Great Communicator" it is Jesus! We will do it Jesus way, preach the gospel in a straightforward and sincere manner without resorting to techniques.

But wouldn't we be throwing the baby out with the bath water? Did not the "word made flesh" use all the best methods of his time (parables, storytelling, etc), and break new ground in communicating the gospel to men and women?

Following his example, Paul went to where the people were to proclaim the good news in ways they could identify with and understand? He preached in synagogues, lecture halls and marketplaces. In Athens he was not afraid to go to the Areopagus (the "Newsnight" of his day) in order to argue his case.

Of course there are dangers in getting involved in the media. They are nothing like the dangers in keeping away and leaving a clear run to those who would oppose the gospel. We need to get our hands dirty but have clean hearts. We must "refuse to practise cunning or to falsify God's word" but take every opportunity for "the open statement of the truth".

When we do this in the media or anywhere else in society, Paul says "we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God" (2 Cor. 4:2), in other words, even in the media, integrity shows through.

Mike Pilavachi heads up the Soul Survivor team and pastors a congregation in Watford specially aimed at reaching young people



STAN CREES
EXPLORES
TECHNOLOGY TURNED
BACK TO FRONT.



WHERE THERE IS NO TELEPHONE

BY JOHN CORBETT

Where there is no telephone is a handbook on short-wave radio communications for missions in developing countries, based on John Corbett's own experience in Zaire, Kenya and Tanzania. The book has had three reprints, and has also been sold to the United Nations.

Available from BMS, Didcot, at £8.50, or find out more on the world wide web library at: <http://www.reliefwe.int/library/wtint/>

New candidates accepted

At the BMS General Committee held earlier this year three new candidates were accepted by the BMS.

Paul & Angela Foster



Dr Paul Foster and his wife, Angela, from Lymm in Cheshire have

been accepted for medical work in Nepal with the International Nepal Fellowship. Paul, a Fellow of the Royal College of Anaesthetists, has been trained in anaesthesia and intensive care medicine. Angela was a nurse in Nottingham and has held other staff nurse posts at Harlow Wood, Manchester and Guy's Hospital.

Paul and Angela are members at Lymm Baptist Church and together co lead the Crusaders (five to seven year olds.) Paul has also worked with Warrington Youth for Christ and has helped with the running of the church's youth club.

Angela has assisted with a church-based Alpha course and then led the nurture group for new Christians that followed on from this.

The couple have three children.

Before they leave for Nepal they will undertake training in theological and cross-cultural studies.

Sarah Hall

Sarah Hall is also a medical recruit for BMS. Currently she works as a practice nurse at a medical centre in Milton Keynes, and her nursing qualifications include a Certificate in Tropical Nursing, awarded two years ago.

Sarah is in membership at Stony Stratford Baptist Church, where she is a joint housegroup leader.

The country of service is not fully known at present and will be determined after further consultation. However it is likely to be Nepal or North Africa.

News in Brief

News



No Globes - but we have Windsor Castle

We don't appear to have had many globe money boxes returned to Didcot, but we take that as good news, and assume you are all using them to raise money for BMS.

However we had a very interesting letter in the Editorial Office recently, from the Australian Baptist Missionary Society, and it included pictures of a wooden money box made of oak panelling taken from Windsor Castle.

In 1827 John James was employed at Windsor Castle to help repair some of the old oak panels. Rather than waste them, he made a small replica of the castle's main gate. In the model, the towers on either side of the gateway became money boxes, and he encouraged his two sons to put their pennies into them. Each year the boxes were emptied, and their contents given to BMS.

One of the boxes found its way to Australia via John's

three granddaughters, Lucy, Bertha and Emma, who attended the Armadale Baptist Church, Victoria.

Some years ago it was given to a missionary enthusiast in New South Wales, where for years it held pride of place on her lounge mantelpiece. She kindly donated it to ABMS, where it has found a final resting place at their headquarters.

John Barclay

A former President of the Baptist Union of Scotland, John Barclay has been nominated as Vice-President of the BMS for 1997/98, and will succeed as President at next year's Baptist Assembly at Blackpool.

John is the son of BMS missionaries, his father having served at Serampore College,



India from 1929 to 51, and since then John has continued his contact

with BMS and world mission. At present he is Secretary of the Edinburgh and Lothian Baptist Association Missionary Auxiliary, and Convenor of the World Mission and International Affairs Committee of the BU of Scotland. He also is a member of General Committee, and last year was elected to Candidate Board and the Nominations Committee. He is also currently serving on the General Committee Working group.

John's background is in education and he has held posts as a Lecturer and Deputy Principal in Colleges of Education in England.

Together with his wife Kathleen, he is in

membership at Morningside Baptist Church, Edinburgh.

Alan Barker

At the AGM of the BMS held at the Baptist Assembly, legal consultant Alan Barker was appointed BMS Honorary Solicitor, taking over from Peter Clark who has served BMS in this capacity for more than 20 years.

In fact Peter has known Alan for around 50 years and at one time was his Sunday School teacher in Watford! Alan started his career as a practising solicitor in Ipswich in 1966, but has taken a couple of career breaks to work firstly with Scripture Union in Cape Town in 1994 where he monitored the South African elections, and then in a similar role in Bosnia.

Alan is a member of Burlington Baptist Church, Ipswich, and is also a Suffolk County Councillor.

Money, Money, Money

BMS Treasurer Mervyn Hancock told the BMS AGM that, although contributions to BMS had risen in the last year, expenditure had exceeded income, and in the end £239,092 had to be taken from the General Reserve to meet the deficit.

However the deficit was lower than anticipated because of the profit on the sale of

investments and an increase in contributions from churches.

Total spending came to £4,784,383, but total income was only £4,545,291. Most of the contributions were for general work (£2,965,974); income from legacies was only 55% of that received the previous year, £563,376 as against £1,015,395, but this had been forecast in the estimates.

BMS General Committee

Daring recommendations have been put forward by a special General Committee Working Group, which, if accepted, could mean a new look to the BMS General Committees of the future.

The Group was set up last summer to consider the structure of the committee, its size and membership, frequency and length of meetings, location, chairmanship and costs.

Currently General Committee has a membership of 204, but this large number of people cannot practically be involved in detailed management and policy making. It was therefore recommended that General Committee be reduced in size to 118. It will still oversee the work of BMS, but will no longer be responsible for the management of the Society's affairs. It will remain the steering, monitoring and appointing body, and be a

forum for discussion on policy matters.

Meanwhile the Board of Management will deal with routine matters, and will be responsible for the detailed working of managing the BMS within the policies determined by General Committee.

Other recommendations were that General Committee should only meet twice a year, and that these meetings should be residential. This would allow more time for a whole variety of activities and would also save on costs.




Relief Fund

Since the BMS Relief Fund's Compassion in Action leaflet was printed last autumn, the following grants have been made:


- OCTOBER 96**
To help Rwandan refugees in Tanzania £5,000
- OCTOBER 96**
Aid for victims of train bomb in Sri Lanka £200
- DECEMBER 96**
Chandraghona Hospital, Bangladesh £1,400
- DECEMBER 96**
Help for tornado victims, Bangladesh £1,640
- DECEMBER 96**
Rwandan refugees (via BWA) £10,000
- JANUARY 97**

Baptist House News

Andy Smith
The news is good! Andy is out of hospital, and has finished his chemotherapy treatment. His doctors are very pleased with his progress, and his most recent body scan was clear.
Please keep praying for Andy and his family.



Hello to Rob Vaines
Perhaps some of you were surprised when you heard a young male voice on the end of the telephone when you asked for BMS Resources, expecting to hear a Scottish female accent! As previously reported Christine Neilson and her husband Jim have moved to New Zealand, and Rob Vaines has taken over the daunting task of despatching all your AV and literature orders, and keeping a check on stock levels.
Rob has come to Didcot from Mexborough in Yorkshire, where he was Executive Administrator of the Yorkshire Alliance of Baptist Youth.



Good-bye to Phil Marsden
At the end of June Phil Marsden, the BMS Youth and Children's Co ordinator, left the Society to take up a position as Youth Co-ordinator at Queen's Park Baptist Church, Glasgow.
Phil originated the new WOW magazine for children, the WOW Club, WOW Action Days, and Roadshows and overhauled the structure of 28:19 Action Teams.

APOLOGY

"Great magazine - shame you can't get our order right."

We know, we know, and we offer you our most sincere apologies if there has been a mix-up with your mh order. We appreciate you have heard this before, but since the installation of our new computer system,

things have not run smoothly here at BMS.

We suddenly found all sorts of problems that we had not anticipated, and this has mainly manifested itself in our database, with knock-on effects in our ability to print off lists, labels and invoices that make sense.

Please don't get too disheartened yet if things take a little time to be put right. By all

means, keep on telling us if subsequent orders are still not as you would like, but also bear with us, and keep calm!

Our small staff are working flat out to correct something like 15,000 records and get them completely up-to-date. We genuinely want to see everything working as it should as much as you do.

Kinshasa air crash victims

£550

MARCH 97

Burma Border Consortium

£5,000

MARCH 97

Food for Albania up to £5,000

APRIL 97

Barisal Mission Hospital

£5,000

APRIL 97

Help for cholera outbreak,

Bolobo, Zaire £2,000

APRIL 97

Help for cholera outbreak,

Yakusu, Zaire up to £7,500

News

ISRAEL

The Baptist World Alliance (BWA) has joined with other religious groups and appealed to the government of Israel to reconsider a proposed new law that threatens Christian witnessing there. This law would imprison any one believed to be guilty of activities seen as "an inducement for religious conversion" for one year. (BWA News)

SOUTH AFRICA

Easter Sunday in East London, saw more than a million members of Africa's biggest church, the Zionist Christian Church (ZCC), take part in the church's annual Easter gathering in a little-known village called Moria in the north of South Africa. The ZCC is an independent church with an estimated total membership of 7.1 million, most of them poor blacks. (ENIB)

UKRAINE

Eleven years after the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, the people, and especially the children are still suffering. BWA regional secretary for Europe, Karl Heinz Walter, said in Klincy, a small town in Russia close to the Chernobyl disaster, eight out of ten children are sick, and over 120,000 people continue to live in what is described as "a dangerous country." However, a group of 25 children from Chernobyl will visit Germany in the next few months. "This will give a symbol of hope," he said. (BWA News)

CENTRAL AMERICA

Nearly 500 people were killed and 1,500 injured, in accidents, or by violence in Central America during Holy Week. El Salvador was the most affected country with 221 people dying, followed by Honduras (138 deaths), Guatemala (62), Nicaragua (24), and Costa Rica (23). Of the deaths in El Salvador 49 were caused by gun shots. (LAP)

ITALY

The Federation of Protestant Churches and Seventh Day Adventist Churches in Italy have been working together to help meet the emergency created by the thousands of Albanian refugees landing on the South Eastern coast of Italy. They have been supporting the work at the refugee camp at Cassano Murge which hosts about 500 people. (nev)

- pastor and church denomination
- city, nation and world leaders
- world evangelisation for the fulfilment of the Great Commission
- the breakdown of Satan's strongholds
- and Operation Andrew (praying for ten people to come to Christ by the year 2000). (BWA News)

Fanini Challenges Baptists

Baptist World Alliance President Nilson do Amaral Fanini issued a challenge to Baptists world-wide at the Executive Meeting of the BWA in March this year. "As we stand on the threshold of a



Nilson Fanini issues a challenge to all Baptists world-wide

new century we have before us opportunities to reach our world" he said. And he has asked Baptists to commit themselves to a three-fold goal: firstly, that every Baptist will win one more person to Christ before the year 2000; secondly, that every church will begin one new congregation before the turn of the century; and thirdly, that each member commit themselves to World Prayer 2000. This means praying for seven minutes each day for:

- personal revival
- family and friends revival

Reconciliation Walk in Turkey

"It's not unusual for Westerners to come here for a holiday", said a travel agent, "but this was special. People want to take their holidays, and speak about forgiveness." The travel agent was talking about Phase Two of a Reconciliation Walk in Turkey, launched last year, with the aim of taking a personal message of apology for the way medieval Crusades misrepresented Christianity to the people of the Middle East. According to Lynn Green, the project's international co-ordinator, the years of brutal fighting are the root of on-going hostility and misunderstanding between the three major religions. Among the first short-term walkers to arrive in Turkey this year was 65 year old American Janice Dubie. "I count it a real privilege to be able to go and apologise for the Crusades' having misrepresented King Jesus, and for all the harm that was done in his name," she said. "I hope that through this initiative many hearts will be touched, and the bitterness they feel will be replaced with love."

This bridge building effort is being well received in Turkey. Cathy Nobles, the

News in Brief

field director commented: "It is difficult for us as Westerners to understand how deep this wound goes. It's hard to describe the depth of feeling the message stirs in the Turkish people. There is an emotional response in which you can see the deep scars the Crusades have left on their hearts."

The Reconciliation Walk continues until July 1999, when a special prayer gathering is planned in Jerusalem to mark the 900th anniversary of the fall of the city to the Crusaders.

(YWAM News)

Bible Society gives Bibles and rice to prisoners

The Peruvian Bible Society (SBP) has announced a new initiative to link distribution of the Bible to social commitment by giving a Bible and a kilo of rice to each of Peru's 1800 women prisoners.

The first prison to benefit from this project will be the Santa Monica gaol in Lima, where there are more than 700 women inmates.

The SBP are not new to initiatives of this kind. Last year they called on Christians to give 75 cents to provide a piece of bread and a copy of John's gospel to every street child in Peru. Another project consisted of delivering a Bible and a packet of seeds to peasants returning to their villages after being displaced by political violence. (ENIB)

"Prison made me love them more"

A Christian worker has spoken out for the first time about his arrest and imprisonment in Iran.

While visiting friends in Colorado, USA, Daniel Baumann, a Swiss-American, aged 33, told of how he and a South African colleague, Stuart Timm, had been working in Central Asia. They went to Iran "to see what God was doing in the nation, and how foreign Christians could serve", but when they tried to leave, in January, their passports were confiscated, they thought, because of a technicality and were told to return to Tehran.

Once back in the capital they discovered they were suspected of spying. They were taken, blindfolded, to the city's infamous Evin prison, where they were given prison uniforms and locked in separate small cells, where they slept on the floor.

"It was scary at first" said Baumann. "But after the first few days I was gradually able to relax a bit more. I felt that God told me I should just be



completely open and honest about who I was and what I was doing; so I was." It was this motivation that led Baumann to share his faith in Christ with his interrogators during long hours of questioning, followed by days

Alistair Brown



Loving the unlovely

The old lady sits at the door of her hut, clutching a bag, listening to those around her. Nothing more, all day. She's blind, owns nothing of value, and is alive only because family and others give her care.

This is south India, and a rag-pickers village. Each day the people climb the refuse tip and scavenge for anything of value, often little more than reusable polythene bags. They resell what they find for a few rupees.

In the caste controlled hierarchy of Indian society these people are so low they are almost off the scale. Only the Christians bother with them, visiting the villagers and teaching the children.

I was glad to hear that. Jesus loved those reckoned unlovely and unwanted by his society, for they had value in God's eyes. The Indian villagers I met were destitute but had the dignity of children of God. Long may it be that the Christians are the people who bother with those others shun.

of solitary confinement.

Apart from the isolation he says he was treated "OK", with three meals a day - although he still lost almost 30 pounds during his imprisonment.

His colleague was released following intervention from the South African government, and Baumann's case was turned over to the courts. He began to accept he could be held "for months, even years."

Then, unexpectedly, one morning he was told to dress

in his own clothes and clear his cell. "I didn't know what was going on. I could have been going to be executed. I thought maybe they were playing a game with me," he said.

Instead he was handed over to Swiss Embassy officials, and freedom. But Baumann says he bears no ill-will towards those who arrested and questioned him. "Any small mistreatment that may have happened was because of the system, not the people," he said.

(YWAM News)

Albania: good news or bad?

Glyn Jones urges a balanced perspective.

All news from Albania at the moment seems to be bad news, especially where the work of the Christian Missions are concerned. At least, that is how it looks at first sight. For most of Albania has descended into anarchy; there is little "law and order" there today. All the BMS missionaries assigned to Albania are safe but they are also back in the UK. Consequently all their work has ceased and their young-in-the-faith Albanian converts were left leaderless. The aid programmes with which the BMS had been associated have now ceased. And finally the missionaries are not able to be in the place where they feel God wants them to be. So, it is all bad news, right?

No! Strangely enough, it is not all bad news. There is actually a lot of very good news coming out of Albania as well as the bad news. For example, all over Albania evangelical Christians are meeting regularly for worship, for prayer and for bible study. Many of them are reporting renewed interest and not a few conversions. Among them are the three Baptist churches established as a result of BMS work. On Easter Sunday 1,200 evangelical Christians of Tirana met together to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, and they did so in "The Pyramid", which was Enver Hoxha's mausoleum (Hoxha was the man who declared all religion dead; today his body rots in an unmarked grave).

The Albanian evangelical churches now have Albanian leaders who are doing everything they can to build-



The gutted agricultural library in Tirana - after the civil unrest.

up the churches in the absence of inputs from foreigners. When our BMS missionaries return to work in Albania they will have to adjust to this new situation. Before evacuation they had been pioneer missionaries, establishing Baptist churches in a country which had none. In future we can expect them to have the more normal role of support missionaries, working alongside autonomous Albanian Baptist churches.

What of the great majority of Albanians who profess no faith? They are now very disillusioned. Having dreamed of freedom to travel, they find they cannot get visas to do so. What they thought was a real democracy, for which they had waited so long, turned out to be a pale imitation of the real thing. Freedom of speech is

limited and the media are still controlled by the ruling Party in Albania, though to be fair, they are less controlled than in Communist times. People are disappointed that their idea of capitalism, in the form of pyramid investment schemes, has failed to keep its promise to make them rich almost overnight and instead has left them worse off than ever. Albanians with integrity are sickened by corruption and bribery which are now rife. And some have begun to discover what we know from our own experience to be true: material possessions do not necessarily bring happiness, nor do increased social freedoms.

Against the background of the prevailing anarchy, their disillusionment will surely make Albanians more aware of the importance of moral and

spiritual values in creating a contented nation. At the moment these values are lacking in Albania: 40 years of Hoxha's communism largely eliminated a sense of right and wrong, and people have learned to suppress any feeling of guilt they may have for the evil they perpetrate. This fact underlies the present widespread and terrifying descent into anarchy.

We know from scripture and history that a just society only grows out of a firm ethical foundation, and in their search for this we may be sure many more Albanians will find the teaching of the bible relevant to them personally. Despite, or perhaps because of, the long deprivation from all things spiritual, many people in Albania continue to be very interested in spiritual matters. Though Western-style materialism had begun to close their hearts during the last couple of years, the recent crises in the history of Albania will surely keep many of its people open to the good news of Christ: Redeemer, Rescuer and Hope of the World. With that in mind, pray that Albanian believers will become active in evangelising their own nation. ●



Glyn Jones was one of 16 BMS personnel evacuated from Albania in March this year. He and his wife Gill returned to Tirana at the end of May.

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

World Mission Link



Dear Audrey

We know that World Mission Link embraces the whole world, and there have been many reminders these last months of the breadth of BMS involvement in the world - Albania, Indonesia, Zaire all making headline news. So we're finding that learning about the country where our Link Up missionaries live and work is not enough. We'd like to appreciate what is going on world-wide. What can we do?

Here are some of the things that other churches, faced with the same dilemma, have done:

Country afternoon for all the family - with food, songs, obstacle course, slides, and plenty of activities for young and old. In some cases the event was planned to coincide with a special day eg

Independence Day.

Use *mh* creatively

- Do a quiz based on one issue - churches have done this at special events, in youth groups and in Sunday services. It's fun, exciting, and even noisy!
- Use *mh* as the study material for your mid-week meeting at regular times throughout the year.
- Use the Prayer Focus pages to create a display for the World Mission notice board every two months.
- Involve young people
- Encourage them to do a drama at a BMS event. One church asked their young people's group to repeat the drama at the Sunday morning service so that more people could see and hear, and it was a great success!
- They also love doing things like making banners, displays and posters. One small village church's Children's Club produced a wall-sized world map.

Use the BMS video Making

Dates for your Diary

Saturday July 5

East Surrey Region Mission Event at Carshalton Beeches
Details: Stan Crees 0181 647 2441

Saturday July 10

Merseyside Baptist Women's Fellowship Rally at Richmond Baptist Church

Tuesday September 9 - Friday September 12

Wales WMA Conference, Pantycelyn Hall, Aberystwyth
Details: Delth Wyn Davies 01766 512957



In May/June *mh* we reported how Clive Doubleday, minister of Poverest Road Baptist Church, Orpington embarked on a sponsored preach in London and Paris. Altogether the total sponsorship money, which Clive donated to BMS, came to £1250.

Here you can see Clive handing the cheque over to Alistair Brown, General Director of BMS, with Philip Halliday, minister of Massy Baptist Church, Paris, looking on.

Jesus Known.

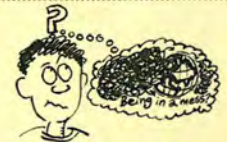
During the past year many churches and groups have written saying they have used this video and accompanying study pack. Most have used it in their mid-week meeting or in house groups, but it's also been shown in Sunday services and in events involving lots of churches.

And lastly

There are lots of churches, children's groups, and young people who have taken the project of the year to heart, and worked for it, and shared it with others. Some use the prepared material, and others

are more adventurous, and come up with their own services and special events. If your church has done something, we'd love to hear from you, and photos of events are an added bonus. ●

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?



HEARD AFTER ONE CHURCH EVENT

"I don't understand all this about 'being a mess'.
Why does 'being a mess' work in 30 countries?"
"I said BMS works in 30 countries."
"That's what I said - 'being a mess.'"

T a k e

Terry and Barbara Page

C o m m i t t e d

Tandem TV and Film are a self-professed “pawn in the game” operating out of the ‘Hollywood of Hertfordshire’ otherwise known as Hemel Hempstead. Probably you will have seen some of their work without even realising it! Tandem TV provided television coverage of the final breakthroughs in the digging of the channel tunnel, and closer to home, the recent BMS videos “You can make the Difference” and “Making Jesus Known”. But who are the people that comprise Tandem TV, and why do they do it?

Tandem TV is essentially the outworking of two people - Terry and Barbara Page. Both possess an amazing sense of vision and purpose to work within the television and film industry.

Terry is no stranger to the cause, having worked widely in the field since his early twenties on the likes of “Horizon”, “Tomorrow’s World” and specialist travel and industrial films. Barbara officially joined the team in 1989 after spending some years in publishing with Lion, prior to which she had also been in the film and video industry.

Together they represent a terrific partnership, wholly committed to a vital ministry of sharing the gospel with three key hallmarks: a genuine concern for people, resourcing, and technological excellence. And this desire is firmly based on their love for and commitment to Jesus.

When it comes to excellence, they pride themselves on being at the cutting edge of technology. Lurking under a desk sits a computer with more memory and storage space than the average congregation, while numerous shelves are filled with CDs to get

just the right music for every job. These have just been joined by a state-of-the-art digital camera which will further enhance the quality of their work. It soon becomes apparent that one thing which saddens them both is the attitude of “It’s all right”

or “It doesn’t matter, it will do!” sometimes adopted by Christians when it comes to making use of the media. Whilst agreeing that part of this commitment to technological excellence stems from a training in the BBC, and continuing work within secular industry, they are both unabashed in sharing their main motivation: “If it is being done for the Lord, it should be at least as good, but preferably better than the standards of the world.” And this is the standard they apply to all their work, be it a health and safety training video within the industrial sector, or a promotional video for Spring Harvest.

Despite being surrounded by all this glittering technological treasure, Terry and Barbara see it for what it really is, a resource. “It’s a tool,” says Barbara, “no different to pen and ink!” And a tool which they both gladly anticipate more and more churches utilising as the technology becomes increasingly accessible. Even here, however, they are keen to point out that churches should not embrace the technology just for the sake of it; rather, as society becomes less ‘reading’ orientated, it should be recognised as a powerful resource for communicating the gospel.

And ultimately, being a resource is how Barbara and Terry see themselves, both to the Christian and the secular community. In terms of the Christian community, they have produced numerous resources for a whole host of different organisations, including BMS. It soon becomes clear that a vast amount of work goes into providing these resources. For example, “Making Jesus Known” involved substantial research and filming in Thailand, Brazil, Belgium, and Zaire, in addition to producing an accompanying workbook and guide. Tandem TV are also responsible for producing this year’s “Would you take the Risk?” videos, and a separate video by trainee Hannah Edy entitled “a piece of the Action” promoting the 28:19 Action Teams. Terry and Barbara really enjoyed working with BMS and commented on how much “part of the family” they were made to feel, and they are hopeful of further joint ventures in the future.

In addition to providing resources, they also have a great desire to help others make the most of their own resources. One key vision is to establish a Video Summer School primarily to train missionaries on home assignment in how to make effective video diaries which can then be shown to their supporting churches. Terry literally beams as he explains their desire to see more “salt and light in the business”, and their

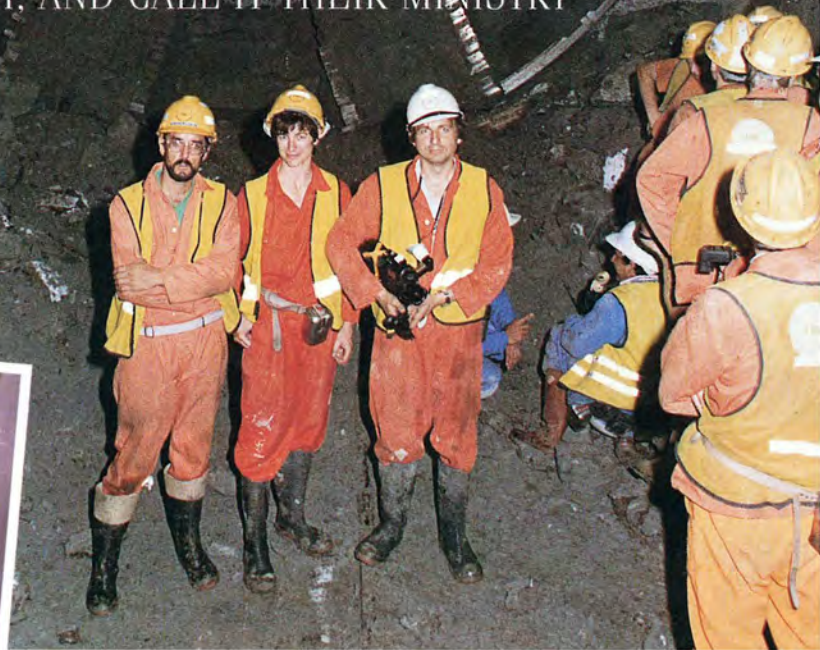


ABOVE: On location with Terry and Barbara.

1

Excellence

CHRIS POPE VISITED TWO PEOPLE WHO RUN A TELEVISION AND FILM COMPANY, AND CALL IT THEIR MINISTRY

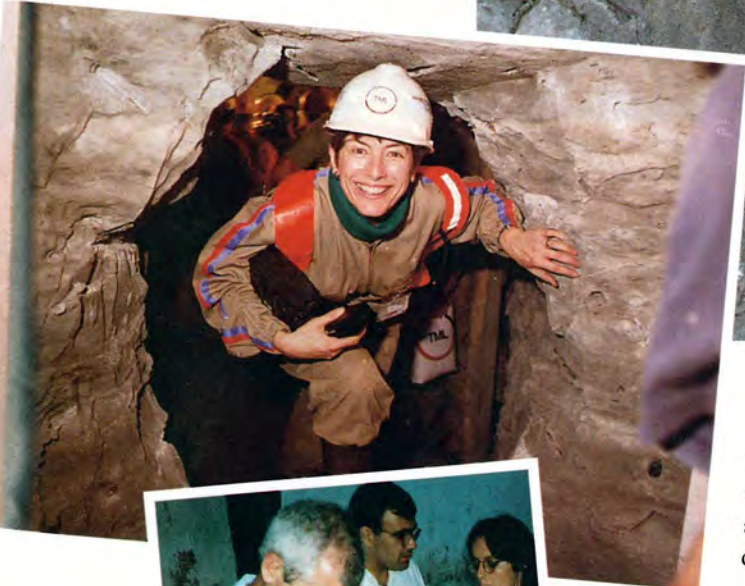


ABOVE: The final frontier - Tandem TV marks the breakthrough under the Channel.

commitment to training young people interested in working in the highly competitive world of the media industry. Even here, their understanding of their role as a ministry shines through as Barbara's first word of advice for anyone wanting to pursue such a career is to prayerfully consider it as a calling, just like any other ministry.

And ministers they are. Behind all the technology, the resources and the resourcing are two people with a heart for others and a mission to spread the love of God and his word to the media world, and through the world of the media. They are two people seeking to "live as salt and light, living lives that make a difference to other people". As such, they are two people who would value our prayers that God would continue to bless their ministry, and steer Tandem TV and Film where he wants in the future.

Chris Pope is Youth pastor at Tunbridge Wells Baptist Church



ABOVE: Barbara Page is the first woman through the Channel Tunnel divide
RIGHT: Terry Page takes a break in filming for BMS in Brazil!



Kimpese

A SERIES EDITED BY
JAN KENDALL THAT
LOOKS AT TOWNS AND
CITIES AROUND THE
WORLD WHERE BMS
PERSONNEL ARE
WORKING

On the road from Matadi

Situated on the old caravan route from the coast inland, Kimpese in Zaire is a lively, busy place. In the centre of town there's hustle, bustle and noise, and everywhere a covering of dust which quickly changes to thick, red mud when it rains.

Lorries, vans and cars filled to bursting bump their way over the many potholes, often stopping to let their occupants buy at the roadside stalls or park for an overnight rest. Except for a brief lull just before dawn, buying and selling continues around the clock.

Most people in and around Kimpese are of Bakongo descent, pygmies and immigrant Bantu from the ancient Kingdom of Kongo, which included what is now known as Angola.

In the late 1800s, labourers were

brought in from Angola to build a new railway linking the main port of Matadi with the capital, Kinshasa (now the 360 km road along the same route passes straight through the town).

Since 1961, Angolan refugees have likewise been finding their way to Kimpese but you will find very few other foreigners here.

Most people have access to piped water, though the nearest community tap may be several hundred yards away. The fortunate few also have electricity and a few households even have television.

Shops, houses and schools are built sturdily enough, though you can still spot wattle and daub walls and the occasional thatched roof. Families are forced to work hard in their fields to survive: in September, the onion crop is sold to raise money for school fees, uniforms and exercise books.

At other times of the year, such basic essentials are covered by the sale of

manioc, peanuts, beans, soya and other produce. As in the more remote equatorial forest villages, goats, sheep and chickens wander everywhere, whereas pigs are better cared for and often kept in special enclosures.

Christian influence

In education

Christians have been central to Kimpese's development, ever since the opening of a Catholic mission in 1901. Seven years later, Protestant missionaries from Britain, America and Sweden found a parcel of land on which to build a school for training pastors and primary school teachers.

Still run jointly by the church communities that founded it, the Centre Evangelique de Cooperation (CECO) now comprises six schools in all: one nursery school, two primary - each with



about 1000 pupils - and three secondary.

At secondary level, those students who can afford it can begin to specialise in practical skills (mechanic, carpentry etc), science or agriculture. Then, on the same site, those who pass the State diploma exam can enter the Protestant University of Kimpese (UPK) to study a range of courses including medicine, law, economics and environmental studies.

A part-time postgraduate course in theology has recently been launched, to complement the four-year pastoral training offered by the CECO Bible School.

Christian influence

In health

Life for the ordinary people of Kimpese is cramped and squalid. Small houses built close together are crammed with people, so diseases like measles spread

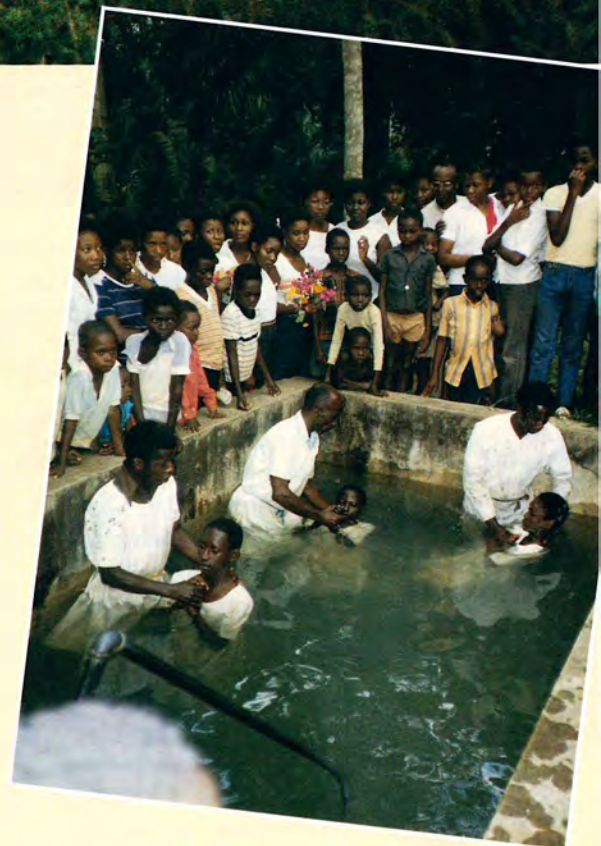
fast and can be fatal. Especially vulnerable are young children, starved of the protein they need in their diet to fight common illnesses.

Water sources are often contaminated; many people suffer from infestation by worms. Drug resistant forms of malaria and tuberculosis, as well as typhoid are all on the increase, helped by poor sanitation and the onset of AIDS.

The belief that sickness is caused by witchcraft and ill-will means that people often go first to the local witch-doctor or traditional healer. Only if that fails do they seek professional help which, particularly in the case of children, is often too late.

In addition, unauthorised medicines sold at market and in the so-called "pharmacies" give inadequate or inappropriate treatment, and can result

Continued on Page 22



TOP: Kimpese – a view towards the hills. **ABOVE:** Church life – one of the regular baptismal services



Continued from Page 21

in resistance to antibiotics. That is why, in 1952, the Evangelical Medical Centre (IME) opened as a joint project between BMS, the American Baptists, the Swedish Covenant Church (SMF) and the Christian & Missionary Alliance (C&MA).

Since then, IME has grown to become a major teaching hospital with 400 beds. Health education and medical services to the local community (including a vaccination programme and the regional leprosy team) are well-organised, but hampered by lack of state finance and deep-rooted superstition.

IME was established by a Swedish mission but BMS has made a great contribution both financially and in personnel.

BMS's influence is great in other ways. In the French language service, the songbooks used at the compound's church had been prepared by Steve and Carolyn Green, missionaries until 1991. There is also a building designed by David Wilson.

Both Carolyn and David have served as BMS presidents.

Our town

K i m p e s e

Christian influence

In employment and community

As well as teaching and health care, these Christian institutions offer the rare chance of a paid job: CECO now employs about 150 people (including teachers) compared to IME's staff of 400.

Apart from the State offices and schools, other such opportunities in Kimpese are very rare. Even if one family member is fortunate enough to find a job, most will need to supplement that income with what they can produce from their fields.

Spare time is precious, spent mostly in the bars, on the football pitch or

making music in one of the many church choirs.

Kimpese houses eight different Protestant denominations, with ten churches and several other smaller groups. But co-operation is good, with monthly leaders' meetings to plan joint activities.

Meanwhile, the main Catholic church, not far from CECO, has a smaller daughter church near to IME, and the Kimbanguists have their own church with a large congregation.

But the number of sects is increasing, most notably the Bundu dia Kongo (BDK) – a mixture of witchcraft and animism, which teaches that Jesus was for the Jewish nation (which in their view includes Europe and North America) so Africans must look to a different saviour. ●



First impressions

Delyth Wyn Davies, the BMS North and Mid Wales Co-ordinator visited Zaire last year

On the outskirts of the town, Gwen turned our car into the IME compound. The compound is on a beautiful site on high ground with fantastic views all around. To the north we could see mountains similar to those in Wales, mountains which we had been admiring throughout the last part of our journey. When we arrived the sun had already begun to set and the flame trees were a glorious bright orange. I was surprised at the compound itself – it is large, the smart buildings are well spaced and there is a lot of greenery with grassy lawns and all kinds of trees and bushes. The workers' houses are semi-detached bungalows set in neat gardens. Everything seemed to be in good condition, in stark contrast to most places we had visited.

The road through Kimpese was full of muddy or wet holes, more so than in other towns. We went through the commercial part and saw people selling goods from small wooden stalls at the roadside, or from rows of single storey one roomed wooden shops. Many large lorries, laden with goods, were parked on the roadside, probably for an overnight stop. The impression was of a bustling town, where there was at least a sense of hope of earning a living with all the passing trade.

My only regret is that we did not have the time to get to know the town and its people. ●



FAR LEFT: Preparing and cooking food for hospital patients

ABOVE: Smart wards at IME – in a crumbling economy the church provides dignified surroundings for the sick

LEFT: They make do and mend in the hospital pharmacy

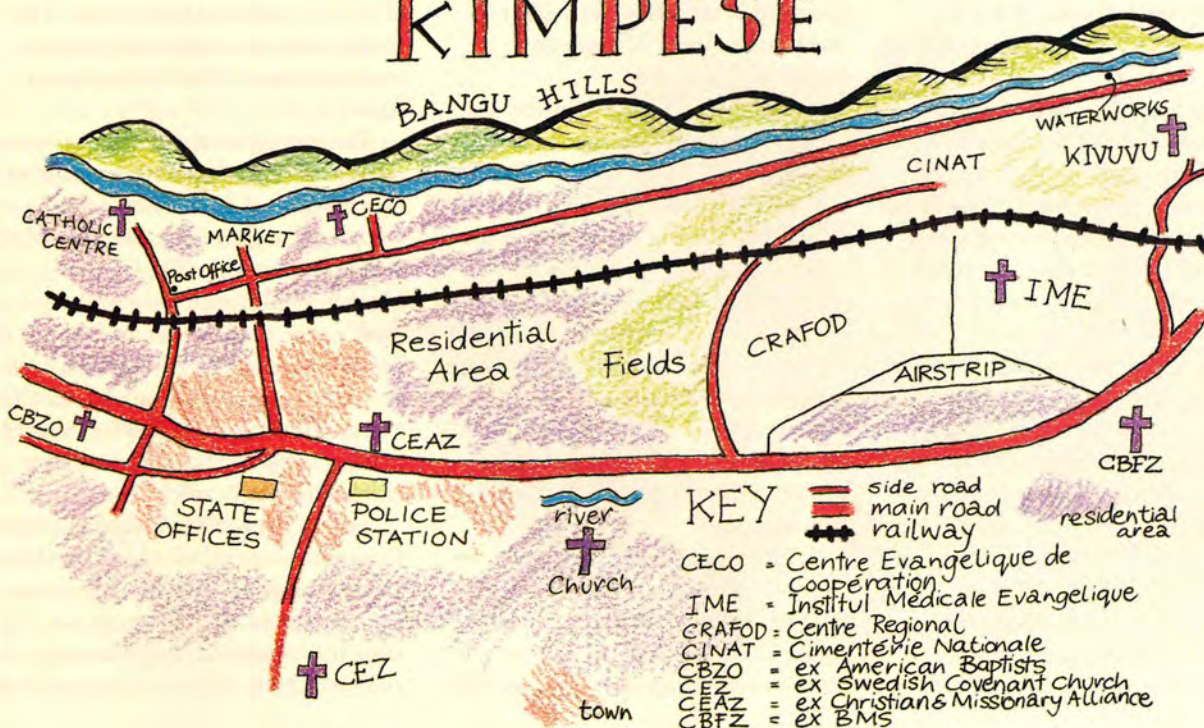


Profile: Mama Nkenge

Life has been hard for Mama Nkenge. A widowed refugee from Angola, she has brought up her three children single-handed, with no income other than what she has earned by selling bananas and other produce from her garden, mostly to missionaries. It is a struggle just to find money to buy a 5kg bag of sugar - the monthly rent on the family's tiny two-roomed house. Elderly and in poor health, her burdens seem to get heavier as her children reach adulthood. Both boys have learned carpentry, but even so work is hard to come by. The eldest got a girl pregnant, forcing his mother to pay a fine to the girl's family, as well as all the costs of the birth. The second boy, sick for much of his life, is now being treated for TB, a severe drain on the family income he was expecting to bolster. The daughter is now living away from home with the father of her third child, but has left her mother to bring up the other two. Yet Mama Nkenge, who has a very simple Christian faith, just says: "I don't know how I would have managed all these years without the help of God and his people." ●



KIMPESE



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A



THE DAY WE HAD OUR
VEHICLE REQUISITIONED
BY THE CIVIL GUARD BY
OWEN CLARK

How on earth did we get into this? We were chugging up the uneven, sandy road in third gear, the rear end swaying a bit under the load. Twelve men, a boy and five goats. It was the goats. We weren't in the habit of shifting livestock, but it was their very legitimacy. Like King Saul when Samuel asked "What is this bleating that offends my ears?" Where had we gone wrong? We were operating from Bwantaba's mud hut of a guesthouse. Waiting for the coffee water to boil that morning, a man had served us with a "Vehicle Requisition" from the Civil Guards up the road. A misnomer if ever there was one! In military uniform they're armed and not especially civil. What they guard is anyone's guess, their main activity being to stop lorries and relieve travellers of their readies.

"Under the terms of Ordinance Law No 036/84 of 28/08/96..." it said, "your vehicle is requisitioned to go to the village of Yo for an enquiry into the death of the chief by burning. We count

on your understanding and moral sense." Thanks! Romans 13 notwithstanding, we weren't keen to get involved. On the other hand, Yo was on chief Labi's list of villages where BMS missionaries had itinerated in the 1930s. We ought to check it out. About 20 kms past Bwantaba, it was said.

From the turning to Bwantaba was already eight kms. A further 12 brought us to Limbimi. Ahead the Inga-Shaba high tension cables hung from massive pylons, like giants marching across the landscape with skipping ropes.

Passing beneath and climbing the rise Yo ought to have come into view, but no such luck. The road ran through a broad, shallow valley, extending to the horizon without a hut in sight. Not even a tree. A shaggy brow of a hill on the distant horizon, Gilbert said, hid Yo. A good 15 kms off!

Reaching the forested hill at last, we had done 40 kms from the main road. Palm fronds screened the chief's large house, where the body lay, and the commandant led his men in to pay their

respects. Chairs were brought and the enquiry set up under the trees. The commandant asked what had happened, and a grised "Chef de quartier" gave his account. The chief had gone out in the morning with two boys to burn off the long grass in a field. They had lit the fire and retreated, but he had fallen to the ground. Unable to rouse him the boys had run to the village. By the time villagers got there the flames had engulfed the body, and the chief was dead. One of the boys, showing no sign of nerves, confirmed this account. The commandant had made notes and read out his summary, which the witnesses signed.

The enquiry over, negotiations began on one side with the elders, presumably over expenses. A goat tethered nearby was led off to the vehicle, but this did not appear to be enough. The Chef de quartier, another man and a son of the chief's were bundled into the back, darkness now rapidly falling. On a track across open country, the talk was all about a farm. Winding slowly down a valley, we came to a stop in pitch darkness, a fire visible fifty metres away.

At that point things became confused. Everyone except ourselves and the three hostages headed for the fire, where loud argument broke out, soon to give way to rapid hoof beats and people running every whichway, with the occasional shot

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A Fair Distance

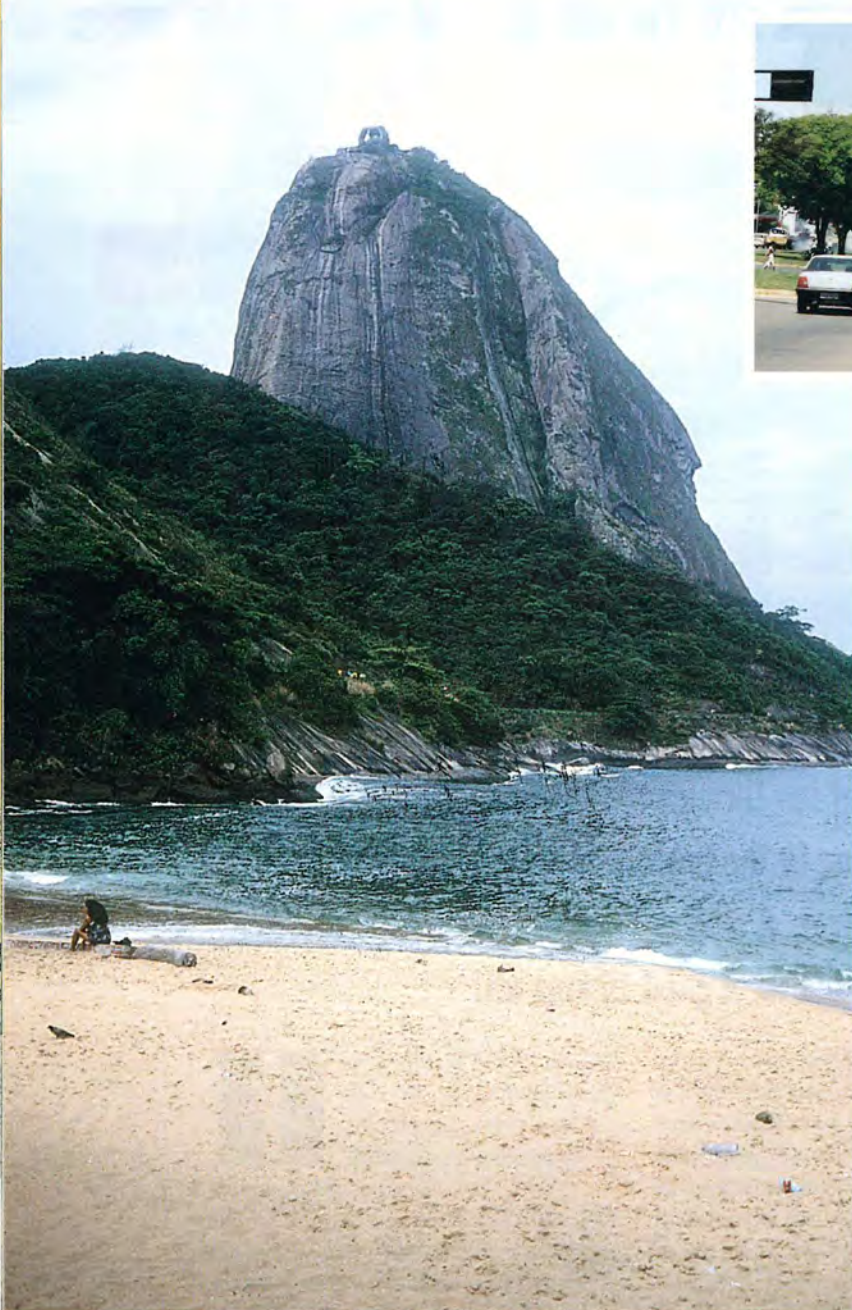
fired in the air. Goats began to arrive, swung by their legs between two people and were hoisted into the back. Everyone piled in, the commandant said "We've finished", and we found our way back to the road. In the dark the return through the valley and back under the cables, had seemed endless. We were now approaching Bwantaba. Why had we ever got involved?

"You'd better have one of the goats" said the commandant, aware of the unpaid extra distance. First instinct was to refuse. But what about the monotonous diet of the Bwantaba folk. Fufu and pondou. They'd never forgive me. "Give it to the chief" I said at Bwantaba. He'd know whether to return it to Yo or simply observe Bateke custom. On delivering the remaining goats to the Civil Guard HQ in Mbankana the commandant expressed his gratitude, and sent for three bottles of Coke. On paper 40 kms doesn't sound much, but on that road, under those conditions, it had been a fair distance.

Next day, with some embarrassment, we bumped into the "Chef de quartier" on his way back to Yo. "When are you coming to my village?" he asked. "We don't have a church." It was a relief to know that he held nothing against us. "We have a busy programme", we said, "and it's a fair distance, but one day we'll come." ●

The road ran through a broad, shallow valley, extending to the horizon without a hut in sight. Not even a tree. A shaggy brow of a hill on the distant horizon hid Yo. A good 15 kms off!





LEFT: Southern American idyll – Sugar Loaf Mountain

ABOVE INSETS: Campo Grande where contrasts are all too apparent

BELOW: On the edge of society – and the city – Campo Grande's favela community

BELOW INSET: First Baptist Church, Campo Grande, where there is a ministry to the deaf

With f

Brian had been a director with Reckett and Colman (the mustard people), but was now retired and serving as missions director in a Baptist Church in Sao Paulo. We sat down together one evening and compared the giving of our two churches.

I had always thought that Shirehampton Baptist Church was generous, particularly when it came to giving to missions, but I was in for an awakening that evening. The average wage in Brazil, according to Patrick Johnstone in Operation World, is about one-sixth of the average wage in this country. We worked out that night that our church gives about \$60.00 per member per month. In their church it was \$72.00 per member per month. Then Brian went over to a

Everywhere I went



ROBERT STACEY SPENT FIVE WEEKS IN SOUTH AMERICA AND SAW THE GOSPEL PROCLAIMED IN WORD AND ACTION



two new church plants in the afternoon (one that meets under a tree, and the other in a favela or slum), then preaching again in the evening service (to 1,200 people). I went to a birthday party just before I left, and even there I was introduced as "the pastor from England who will now bring us a word"!

The churches are not only preaching the gospel in word, but also in action. A number

heading up this work, said to me that what he longs for is vibrant churches to be established in the favelas.

Last year First Baptist Church in Campo Grande became so concerned about the poorer people in the favelas that they drew together a team of professional people from the church to go into the favelas and for a week offered medical and dental care for

ervour and generosity

dresser and took down an envelope which he passed to me. Inside were two wedding rings. He said that they had received a special offering for mission the previous Sunday. One couple had nothing to give, and yet they felt they must give something. They agreed together to give their wedding rings, because they felt that the good news of Jesus was so vital.

In the five weeks that I spent in South America, I visited five cities, and spoke to 30 pastors, 10 missionaries and countless other Christians. One church I visited in Buenos Aires has services from 1am to midnight. They shut for just one hour to clean the building. This goes on seven days a week. When the pastor is around, he sometimes preaches 10 times in one day!

The best estimates put the number of Christians in Brazil at around 16 per cent of the population, but that figure is increasing all the time, and the church is said to be growing at around four times the rate of the growth of the population.

One afternoon I joined about 20 pastors from Baptist churches around Rio. Every church represented was experiencing growth, and the smallest had 400 members. I stayed with a pastor in Rio, who had spent a number of years studying in Bristol. During the week I spent in Rio, everywhere I went I was introduced as "the pastor from England who will now bring us a word"!

First, it was their youth group (just 600 members), then a testimony and a song in the morning service (to 1,200 people). Next, preaching in

of the churches I visited had a ministry to deaf people. It was great to see up to 100 people worshipping the Lord by signing. When I spoke in one church I was being translated into Portuguese, and then into sign language.

A number of churches had joined together to start a work called "Hope Factory". They had acquired a redundant building, which was situated between eight favelas. They were providing many services to the community from this factory, particularly life skills training for young people.

I was impressed by the work that BMS is involved with in Sao Paulo. There is a team of workers providing good schooling for children aged five to seven from the favelas; there is no state provision for these children.

Stuart Christine, who is

free. They gave out tooth brushes to the children and showed them how to use them. They also shared the Lord Jesus with them.

At the end of the week the church said that they would come back and lead a bible study with anyone who would like that. It was held in the home of a man who had two small rooms in which he lived with his wife and nine children. I came home feeling that we need to do all we can to help our brothers and sisters as they reach out in love to try to address some of the immense needs in their country, not least because of successive corrupt governments.

Let's do all we can to help them as they serve the Lord.

Robert Stacey is minister of Shirehampton Baptist Church, Bristol

was introduced as the pastor from England who will now bring us a word!

TAKE 2

Short Wave - did you know that?

• The 66 largest short-wave broadcasters provide 2,500 hours of programming a day

• Short-wave is valued most: in developing nations where TV and other high tech media are really only for the elite and urbanised sectors of society and in countries where information is regulated and censored

• It is estimated that 48% of the world's population is not free to receive information or choose from where they get it. Short-wave is still one of the most effective means to reach listeners who are not free.

• A consortium of companies has been formed to develop a 'smart' receiver to make tuning to short-wave as easy as medium wave. This consortium includes BBC, Voice of America, Deutsche-Welle, Radio Australia, Radio Austria, Radio Canada and three short-wave receiver manufacturers: Philips, Sangean and Sony.

• It is estimated that the last audiences to abandon short

FACTS AND FIGURES

Number of TV sets and radio receivers per 1,000 people in:

| Country | TVs | Radios |
|--------------------------|-----|--------|
| Albania | 87 | 176 |
| Angola | 6 | 28 |
| Bangladesh | 5 | 43 |
| Belgium | 451 | 769 |
| Brazil | 207 | 386 |
| Canada | 639 | 1029 |
| Central African Republic | 4 | 68 |
| El Salvador | 92 | 412 |
| France | 407 | 888 |
| Guinea | 7 | 42 |
| India | 35 | 79 |
| Indonesia | 59 | 146 |
| Italy | 421 | 791 |
| Nepal | 2 | 33 |
| Nicaragua | 65 | 262 |
| Sri Lanka | 981 | 198 |
| Thailand | 114 | 191 |
| Trinidad | 315 | 492 |
| UK | 434 | 1143 |
| USA | 814 | 2118 |
| Zaire | 1 | 97 |
| Zimbabwe | 26 | 81 |

(Figures are for 1991)

wave will be people with minority languages who are also more economically deprived.

Information supplied by John Wheatley, Consultant for New Technology at FEBC.

Fact

'Up there' at the moment there are 1000 working communication satellites and another 1000 which are no longer working.

BT CORPORATE PICTURE LIBRARY; A BT PHOTOGRAPH



A bit of the Action

Robert Stacey talks about professional people from First Baptist Church, Campo Grande taking free medical and dental care into the favelas (p. 27) and sharing Jesus with the people there.

The term 'servant evangelism' has been coined - the church serving the community by undertaking practical tasks - absolutely free, demonstrating the free love of God. Evangelism at a head-to-head level can result in arguing, but when people are touched heart-to-heart, they often find it hard to resist. It has been said that our generation says "Show me, don't tell me."

The kind of projects you could undertake are:



- giving away hot or cold drinks
- shopping for 'shut-ins' or busy people
- doing a free shoe shine
- window cleaning
- gardening services
- gutter cleaning
- giving away free flowers on special days like Mothering Sunday
- providing meals and babysitting for people on their house moving day

Useful addresses

Churches Advisory Council for Local Broadcasting (CACLB)
PO Box 124, Westcliff-on-Sea, SSO 0QU.

Jeff Bonser is contactable on 01702 348369

Ian Rose/Soundwaves Radio, PO Box 223, Horsham, Sussex RH13 5FA

SAT-7 Head Office
PO Box 6760
CY-1647 Nicosia
CYPRUS
Phone (357) 2 36 10 50
Fax (357) 2 36 10 40
<http://www.sat7.org>

SAT-7 Support Office
PO Box 118 London SE9 2UB UK
Phone/Fax 0181 859 4035

Tandem TV & Film Ltd
10 Bargrove Avenue
Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 1QP
Phone 01442 61576

BMS Web site
<http://www.rpc.ac.ox.uk/bms/index.htm>

BOOK REVIEW

SHIFTING REALITIES

REVIEWED BY ROB VAINES

Information Technology and the Church by David Lockhead
Publisher: WCC

At first glance, I thought this book was about the way that technology is being introduced into church life, but it does actually examine more closely the technical side of technology. The author begins by exploring the demonic and messianic strains in our cultural images of technology, and then moves on to give the 'non-literate' person a long look at the basics of computer use, looking at communication, e-mail, the Internet, and above all, the World Wide Web. Also covered are computer influence in daily life: cash point transactions, TV remote control, microwave cooking and washing machines.

Lockhead also looks at how some churches, ministers and ministerial organisations are now

more and more using computers, paying particular emphasis on the emergence of the largest interdenominational computer network: Ecunet.

Towards the end of the book, Lockhead asks questions like: What is this technology doing to us as people and as Christians? How is digital technology reshaping the world that we are living in? And what is our future in this technological world?

I personally have used computers for several years in the context of church application - producing weekly news sheets, newsletters and publicity - and so I was quite excited when I first saw this book. I thought it would give information about introducing or upgrading computers in church life. Regrettably, it did not live up to this expectation, and was, in fact, more of a technical manual complete with long lists of computer usage and advancements.

Rob Vaines is Resources Assistant in the BMS Department for Constituency Support

Letter to BMS

Dear BMS

This is just a word of thanks for your site on the world wide web. It has come into its own with the rapidly changing situations in both Zaire and Albania. With these countries being in the news, but with not much being reported of specific missionary work, it was great to have the up-to-date info of what was happening. We found this particularly so with the evacuation of the Albanian missionaries. To pray on Sunday with news of them arriving safely at Heathrow the previous day has helped to make mission more immediate.

We discussed this at our Association council meeting last week, and there was a general feeling that BMS had got it right and had served us well.

Yours in his service

Revd Ian Inglis, Sandhurst Baptist Church



Landmines

The dazzling smile of this young man almost holds one's eyes from travelling down the picture to see that he is a victim of a landmine in Cambodia which blew off both his legs below the knees. Cambodia is one of the countries worst affected by landmines.

Landmines are about just that - land. They are used to deny land, destroying the fabric of rural societies which depend on agriculture and grazing. In Cambodia and Afghanistan an average of 35 per cent more land could be cultivated if it were not for the threat of mines. Areas once self-sufficient in food production often become reliant on aid.

Landmines are not legitimate weapons of war. Ninety per cent of victims killed by landmines are not soldiers, but civilians killed in peace time. Over 70 people each day are still

being killed or injured by landmines. Children are especially vulnerable as childhood games and occupations such as herding and collecting firewood and water expose them to greater danger.

The new Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, has raised the issue of landmines with his French and German colleagues. They agreed to give priority to the early conclusion of a legally-binding international agreement to ban world-wide the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines.

You may want to remember landmine victims by building rows of one of a pair of shoes (symbolising the victims - who no longer need them). Send this month's Action Card to Mr Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, 10 Downing Street, London SW1, congratulating him on Mr Cook's statement on landmines.

TAKE 2

A piece



SAM GIBSON ASKS LAST YEAR'S ACTION TEAMS WHAT THEIR YEAR AT THE FRONT LINE OF MISSION HAS MEANT TO THEM

As one BMS 28:19 Action Team ends, another begins. The 1996/97 teams, having returned from places as far apart as Thailand, Brazil, Portugal, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Jamaica, and Portugal, have now also completed their tour of British Baptist churches.

After a final debriefing, they have launched back into life in the UK. Many have gone on to university, others are looking for jobs. Many have had their plans changed by God during the time they have been away.

So, have the struggles and challenges been worth it?

Without exception, team members speak about changed relationships with God.

"Never before have I experienced such a depth in my relationship with God and had to walk so closely beside

him. Thailand was one of the hardest and yet most amazing times of my life" (Leigh Cumming, 23, Thailand team)

"Over the six months in Malta, I learned that God works even when we don't feel adequate and we feel we have nothing to offer him. You think you can give God so much in a 'year out' but the truth is that ultimately God will bless you and give you much more than you can ever imagine" (Catherine Crump, 18, Malta team).

"Sometimes it felt like I was going under in Zimbabwe, but God was always my life jacket" (Alex Jones, 19, Zimbabwe team).

"Being that close to the mountains of Nepal really brought home what a powerful and incredible God we have. He is greater than anything else" (Helen

Schwier, 18, Nepal team).

These are plainly not the casual experiences of globetrotting young people on a subsidised jolly. They are responses to six intensive months spent at the cutting edge of mission.

Today, another 32 successful candidates like them are preparing for their Action Team year, beginning on September 1 with five weeks' intensive training.

This year's teams will spend six months working in the UK, Zimbabwe, France, Italy, Thailand, Brazil, India and Portugal.

Action Team members come from a variety of backgrounds. Some are taking a year out before or after university, others are taking time off from work; some have been Christians for years, others for just one or two years.

But there is one common thread linking all these young Christians – they want to serve God and to be changed by Him.

"Taking this year out is, to me, taking time out to allow God to work in and through me. It is time dedicated to seeking God's

guidance and looking for what he wants for my life. From this year I hope to find out things about myself that I have not yet discovered, I hope that I will learn to become totally reliant on God and come to know him more deeply and I hope that I will be able to use the gifts God has given me to spread his message" (Jenny Sellick, 18, 1997/98 Italy team).

"I want to help in whatever way is necessary, giving God glory and working to the best of my ability and helping the people I meet to do the same through music, juggling, teaching, talking to them or whatever else I could offer" (Phil Brown, 18, 1997/98 Thailand team).

"I need to see some of the world in order to begin to understand peoples real needs, not just second hand on the TV or in a text book. I am



of the action



sure I will learn a lot in this year out, both about myself and about the power of God" (Sarah Wood, 18, 1997/98 India team).

"God has done so much for me that I want to let other people know how great He is and help them to know him personally. My greatest hope for the team is that we'll get to see people being changed by God through our work. I also hope to learn more about the world, about life and about myself" (Susan Tulley, 18, 1997/98 Zimbabwe team).

No matter what you're doing in your church, or how old or young you are, everyone

can get involved in the work and ministry of BMS 28:19 Action Teams. You can pray for these young people who are taking up Jesus' challenge "go and make disciples of all nations." (Matt 28:19). You can go to offer encouragement when they visit your area.

And this year, you can support the BMS Project 97, 'a piece of the Action', which aims to raise money to help pay the costs incurred in sending young people overseas.

This project centres on a video which features the work of the 1996/97 Portugal Action Team; workbooks, prayer cards and posters are also available to help you raise awareness in your church and among your friends.

Take a lead from these young people. Get in on a piece of the action! ●



ACTION TEAMS KEY

From top: Jamaica Team, Malta Team, Zimbabwe Team, Nepal Team, Thailand Team, Portugal Team, and Brazil Team.

Prayer *focus*



News from BMS colleagues and partners around the world to complement the BMS Prayer Guide

Albania



In May, BMS Europe Representative John Passmore spent five days in Albania exploring the situation with BMS missionaries Gill Jones and Roger Pearce (pictured left). Despite the trauma and upheaval, they report that the church is strong and discovering a new maturity and understanding of God's spiritual gifts in their lives.

At the time of their visit, the capital Tirana was relatively quiet but it proved impossible to travel south to Vlora, where BMS had planned major hospital work. They visited the locations of other mission work to check the condition of buildings and the result of mass looting. Although personal property was largely untouched, they were dismayed to see the devastation of some buildings and projects – like Tirana University's clinic and library, built up with help from Operation Agri. The building had been looted and set on fire (pictured below left).

Gill says she was heartbroken at what had happened but greatly encouraged that there are still Christians there. "We went to take the gospel and the Christians there are testimony to that. They're building the church in a better way than we could do now."

The future still presents a host of challenges but BMS has started to release missionaries back into the work in Albania; Gill and Glyn Jones returned in May.



Please pray

- for still greater love and depth of fellowship amongst Albanian Christians, some of whom are grieving the loss of friends and family members
- for God's peace to pervade a political situation still fraught with difficulties: while plans for elections are settled, new leaders find themselves ill-prepared for the huge responsibility of rebuilding the country
- for wisdom as Gill, Roger and their colleagues consider the future of the work in Albania

AFRICA



Sylvia and Adrian Hopkins
CENTRAL AFRICAN
REPUBLIC

The civil war has caused serious problems for the CBM's River Blindness programme, with supplies of Ivermectin running low and travel hazardous.

Nevertheless, Adrian and Sylvia Hopkins are making the most of every opportunity: unexpectedly stranded overnight at Zemio in the east of the country, Adrian was able to carry out two eye operations that evening - and another seven the next morning, before moving on!

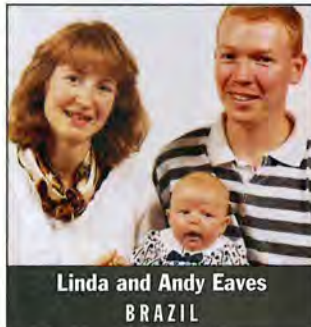
Since the army mutiny last November and subsequent intervention by French troops, an amnesty has been declared for the rebels, but shooting can still be heard on the streets of Bangui.

Please pray:

- for Adrian's training courses in eye care for nurses
- for Sylvia's teaching work by correspondence

- for transport, now the Mission Aviation Fellowship pilot - who provided a vital link - is moving to Chad
- that the World Bank would agree to support CBM's work in this troubled region.

LATIN AMERICA



Linda and Andy Eaves
BRAZIL

Andy and Linda are now on home assignment, but back in Fortaleza, preaching, teaching and mending pipes were all part of Andy's daily work. He also visited and spoke at a state-run children's home, as a representative of the Rescue and Restoration project organised by Youth With A Mission.

Former street kids living in the home heard the good

news of Jesus Christ and many responded to Andy's message of hope.

Elsewhere, Andy was involved in a door-to-door survey of local people's needs, part of the groundwork for a new social action charity to be set up by Fortaleza's First Baptist Church. Following a bible study in the ramshackle "train-track favela", he also explored the possibility of renting a house there as a springboard for further outreach into that community.

Please pray:

- for vulnerable children and teenagers exposed to violence on the streets of Fortaleza - that they would respond to the offer of life in Jesus
- that the planned social action programme would bear lasting fruit in the community
- for a renewal of piped water so that people are no longer forced to use old wells and contaminated ponds
- for Andy, Linda and the children coming to the end of their home assignment: for a safe journey back, and for renewed energy and vision



Gerry and Johan Myhill
BRAZIL

Electricity has arrived on the island of Ilha Rasa, bringing power, light and a complete change in the local lifestyle.

Refrigeration means fish and meat can be stored, cutting food waste which was until now unavoidable. But the advent of TV has captivated a community whose knowledge of the outside world stretched no further than the mainland port of Guararecaba.

For fishermen, late nights watching films mean their nets stay idle long past dawn, while for wives and children, soap operas eat up precious time.

Please pray:

- for continued growth in their church at Morretes and for extension plans
- that community relationships and values will survive the change of lifestyle

Zaire

Give thanks that Kabila's takeover of what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Mobutu's exodus have taken place with a minimum of bloodshed. Seven BMS personnel are continuing with their work there: Owen and

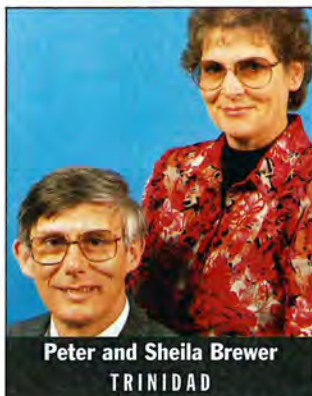
Deanna Clark, and John Mellor in Kinshasa; Pat Woolhouse, Janet Claxton, Gwen Hunter and Margot Bafende in the Lower River region. Please continue to pray for the new regime, as it tries to stand this tottering nation on its feet again.

Prayer focus



Around the world

CARIBBEAN



Peter and Sheila Brewer
TRINIDAD

Planning for probable future work in Trinidad, Peter and Sheila have visited the island's 21 Baptist Union churches and have met their pastors.

They were present at the culmination of a crusade – a service in which there were two sermons and 35 people baptised!

Baptist work in Trinidad is fragmented, and Peter and Sheila are looking to a future in which the different Baptist groups can come together for a decision in principle on a united training programme.

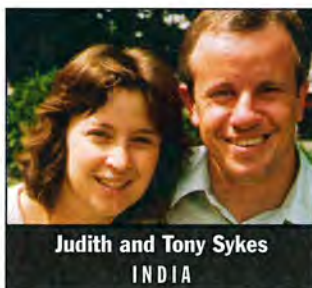
Please pray:

- for talks between Baptist groups in Trinidad towards

increased co-operation

- for Peter and Sheila that they may receive clear guidance for the future.

ASIA



Judith and Tony Sykes
INDIA

In January Tony and Judith began their service with BMS in India. Tony is now using his civil engineering skills at the Medical College Campus in Vellore.

Within a week of their arrival work on the construction site had begun – 450 people working with a great sense of purpose. Men with their shovels moving sand, and women in saris and hard hats carrying sand and cement on their heads.

Judith has begun to help three times a week at Anbu Illam, a hostel for children with cerebral palsy.

Please pray:

- giving thanks that Tony and Judith have received a warm welcome, and that they have been in good health
- for Tony as he gets more involved at work and builds up relationships with the other engineers
- for Judith's involvement at Anbu Illam hostel. Is God leading her to a long-term commitment here?
- for opportunities for language study.

Carlentini is without a library, and education in Sicily is recognised as being poorer than in mainland Italy.

The churches they are leading look promising. Lentini Baptist Church runs a documentation centre set up in response to the murder of anti-mafia judge Falcone; on Easter Saturday, the centre's amateur theatre company put on an anti-mafia play – the first ever production to be sponsored by the local council and attended by the Mayor.

EUROPE



Sarah and Chris Mattock
SICILY

Chris and Sarah Mattock's move from Ferrara to Carlentini is quite a change for them and their children, Judith and Simon.

There's the strong Sicilian dialect to adjust to and they now live in a small flat, with no garden and no local park.

Please pray:

- for the development of youth work at Lentini Baptist Church, where there are few children and no teenagers
- for a Federation of Italian Protestant Churches plan to create a united Baptist, Waldensian and Methodist church in Catania
- for the growth of pastoral support in the Baptist Church

Correction

In our China Church Overview (May-June, Page 9), we said Nestorian monks brought Christianity to China in the year 1635. It should have read 635.

Checkout

Departures (July)

- Colin and Marcia Pavitt to Brazil
- Andy and Linda Eaves to Brazil
- Robert and Catherine Atkins to France

Departures (August)

- David and Rachel Quinney Mee to El Salvador
- Peter and Margaret Goodall to Sri Lanka
- Vince and Sadie MacDougall to Brazil
- Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite to Brazil
- Stuart and Georgie Christine to Brazil
- Geoff and Chris Bland to Thailand

- Phil and Rosemary Halliday to France
- Wayne and Wendy Hadley to France
- Neil and Ruth Abbott to France

CORRECTION: Mike and Jean Gardiner will not be going to Brazil as reported in May/June. We apologise for the error.

Arrivals (July)

- Robert and Catherine Atkins from France
- Chris and Alison Rudall from Nepal
- Geoff and Chris Bland from Thailand
- Phil and Rosemary Halliday from France

- Wayne and Wendy Hadley from France
- Colin and Denise Clark from Nepal
- Janet Claxton from Dem. Rep. of Congo (Zaire)
- Mark and Claire Ord from Italy
- Neil and Ruth Abbott from France

Overseas visits:

- Alistair Brown, David Martin to Canada and Brazil
- Derek Rumbol to Angola
- Sian Williams to Sri Lanka
- David Kerrigan to Taiwan
- Frederick George to South Africa and Angola

Travel Tales

A chicken and egg situation



JOHN PASSMORE

John Passmore is the BMS Europe Representative and was a missionary in Bangladesh for ten years.

According to the profile of the Regional Representative for Europe in the January to April Prayer Guide, I “keep chickens as a pastime”. There have been times at the lunch table in Baptist House when the topic of conversation has

moved on to poultry keeping. The relative qualities of dry pellets against wet mash and incubation times have prompted

comments about anoraks and train spotting! However let’s start at the beginning.

In Bangladesh the night guard’s duties, as well as perambulating the entire compound checking security and deterring intruders, also included striking the hour all through the night. This was done by hitting a three feet

long piece of railway track, which was suspended from the goal post each evening, with a short length of reinforcing rod. On those hot, sticky nights when sleep just would not come we often counted the resulting “chimes” through the night.

This was not one of those nights. I was in a deep sleep and took a while to surface when the guard called through the window, with a sound of urgency in his voice, to come outside quickly with my torch.

This was at the time when I was still engaged in language study but breeding chicks in my spare time both as a diversion from learning more irregular verbs and as a way of introducing improved breeds to the poultry population.

It was a way of learning new vocabulary as the teacher said he had never been asked what the word for a broody hen was before! That was necessary when a colleague, returning from a visit to agricultural missionary, David Stockley, handed me a dozen eggs with a note simply saying “Find yourself a broody hen”.

After finding the said hen and hatching those eggs I was offered an incubator by a Norwegian development agency. Soon there were eggs, chicks and pullets everywhere.

The incubator was in the spare bedroom and a new house was built for the rapidly growing poultry. All was not going to plan though as although the birds were growing, it did seem that numbers in one section were decreasing. On the night in question we discovered why.

Once outside in the cool dark night I was met by a little posse all anxious to explain the reason for the summons. A stick was thrust into my hand and as I had the torch, it was decided that I should go into the chicken house. The night guard had spotted a large snake disappearing through the bamboo wall.

The plan was – or at least their plan was – that I should go in armed with torch and stick, create noise to frighten the snake and drive it out. They would wait outside by the hole through which the snake had been spotted entering and as it reappeared they would deal with it. Thanks! I go inside where we know there is a cobra and you wait outside hoping it comes out through the same hole.

Fortunately the snake had read the script and promptly made for the exit. There was a flailing of clubs and the snake lay dead. It might just have escaped as their aim was not too good in the dark but the snake had miscalculated. Since its last visit to the chicken house the prey had grown and now with its meal swallowed it was unable to get all the way through the hole in the wall.

After checking that it really was dead, the snake was taken outside to a by now large group of onlookers and slit open. There lay the answer to the riddle of the disappearing chicks – two pullets, swallowed whole, side by side along the length of the snake. It had been trapped by its greed.

And the moral of the story is ... don’t admit to having a big torch!

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