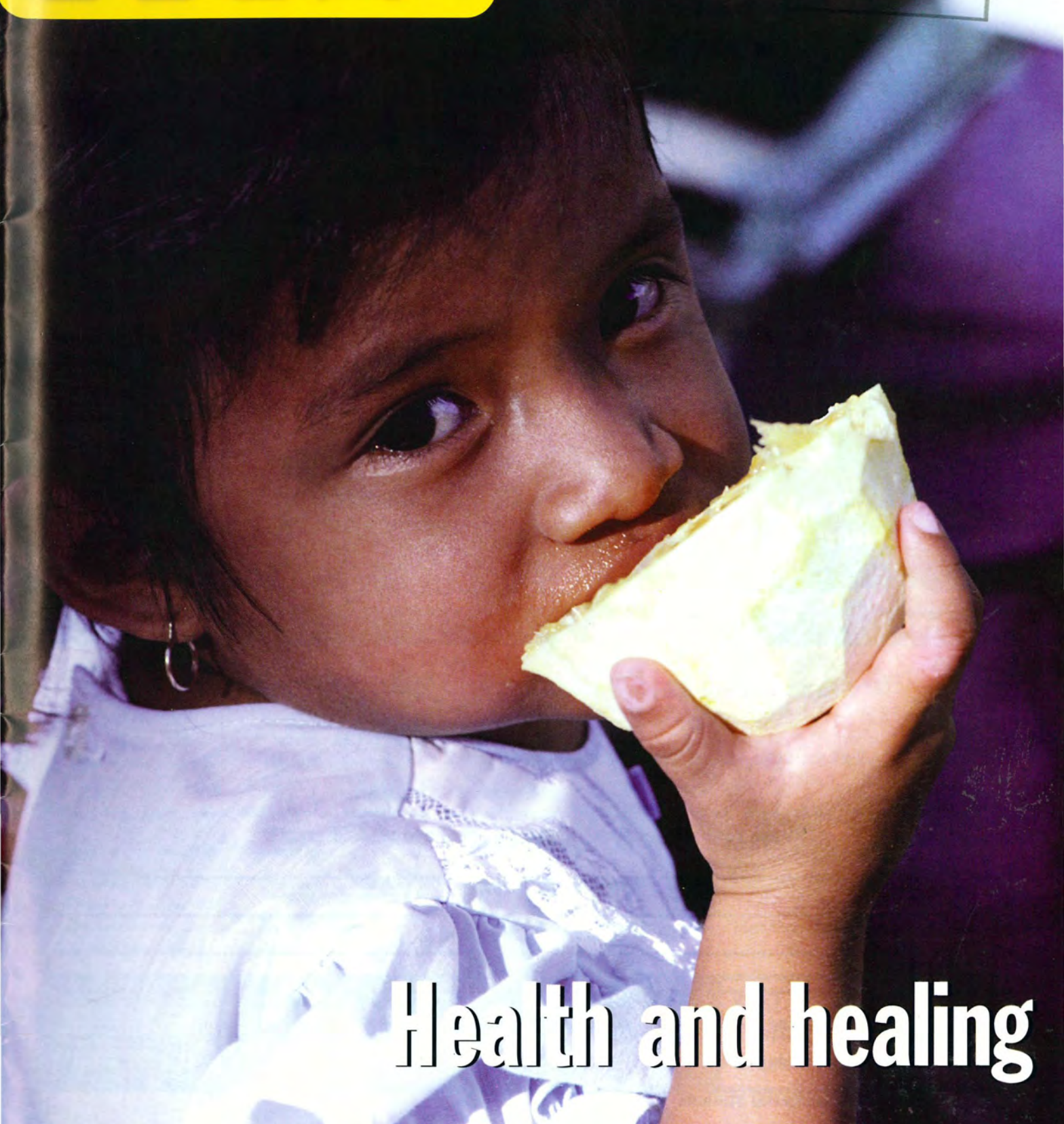


mb

News around the world

Focus on Baptist Theological
Seminary Library
Prague
Czech Republic

Action teams personnel
international



Health and healing

Pastors Abroad - Phillip Hatton retraces his steps

GRANTS



CALLING
ALL BAPTIST
MINISTERS
AND MINISTERIAL
STUDENTS

- Did you know that as a Baptist minister you could be eligible for a grant towards the cost of a sabbatical visit overseas?
- And did you know that if you are the minister of a church which has sent out BMS missionaries you, too, could be eligible for a grant to enable you to make a pastoral visit to the country where your personnel are serving?
- Did you know that students in Baptist colleges can also get grants towards an overseas visit that will relate to their future ministry?
- We won't deny there is some small print attached to these payments, but by-and-large it's common sense and hassle-free.

Want to know more?

Fill in the coupon below and send it to Andrew North at BMS.

He'll send you further details.

But hurry: the grants are limited and are taken up quickly.

Start planning now for 1998/99

Please rush me details of BMS sabbatical and student grants.

Name Revd/.....

Address.....

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.....Post Code

I am a minister seeking a sabbatical grant

I am a minister of a church that has sent out BMS missionaries

I am a Baptist ministerial student

Send to: Andrew North Baptist Missionary Society Baptist House PO Box 49 Didcot Oxon OX11 8XA

contents

JAN KENDALL



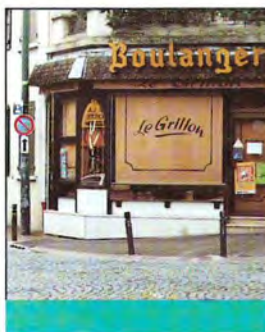
When asked about quality of life, people in this country often reply that everything will be all right if they keep in good health. Somehow, having the freedom of a healthy mind and body, not weighed down with malfunctions and defects, is a weapon against anything and everything that life throws at us.

Even being able to think like that is a luxury that many millions of people cannot dream of. Being born, and surviving the first five years of life is a hurdle too great for many. Two hundred and fifty thousand children die every week worldwide from malnutrition and childhood illnesses. And if they do withstand this, there are plenty more obstacles to defeat them through childhood, teenage years and into adulthood - disease, malnutrition, lack of preventative medicine, insanitary conditions, too few doctors and nurses - the tip of an iceberg intermingling with other facts of life like unemployment, war, disasters or crop failure. The end of the sorry tale is that they are then likely to die in their 40s or 50s compared to their 70s for someone in the Western world.

Thank God for BMS workers like Ian Smith, fighting TB in Asia - disease that has been virtually wiped out in the West, and Mary Parsons, helping young mothers and babies to survive in a corner of Brazil where up to very recently six out of 100 babies died. You can read their stories on pages 4 and 10.

This month we say goodbye to an old friend, John Passmore, who has been writing for us for two years. John's column has been a very popular one, and has made us all laugh as we have been very glad we weren't caught in the same situations. We have had requests from all over the world to reproduce Travel Tales - so John's contribution will be sadly missed on a global scale.

Jan



COVER IMAGE

PHOTO: ©1996 PHOTODISC INC

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Printed by Alden Colour
Oxford

Subscription for 1997 mb and BMS Prayer Guide are published as a complete package. £6.00 through church mb distributors £7.98 by direct mail (inc p&p). Six issues of mb with three of BMS Prayer Guide plus free Annual Review. Overseas p&p at the rate applicable.

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

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ISSN 0264-1372

Missionary Herald the magazine of the Baptist Missionary Society

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NEXT ISSUE JAN - FEB
Justice and Peace

Caring and campaigning for a fairer world

The Good News and the Bad

IAN SMITH TELLS
ABOUT HIS WORK -
FIGHTING TB

Imagine you are at the doctors. He has bad news and some good news for you. The bad news is that you have a life threatening disease. The good news is that it can be cured. But he offers you a choice. "We have two types of operation for this disease" he says. "The first is a small operation - quite easy to do, cheap, you'll be in hospital for a day or two, and I'll only need to see you once or twice after that. However, it only has a 50 per cent chance of a permanent cure." He pauses a second, and then goes on, "The second is a much larger operation - you'll be in hospital for up to two months, and I'll need to see you every month for the next six months. It's more difficult and more expensive for you, but it has a much higher chance of cure - about 85 per cent."

A hard choice? Not really - most of us would go for the bigger operation with the higher cure. We're willing to pay the higher cost in terms of money and inconvenience, if we can see a greater benefit in the future.

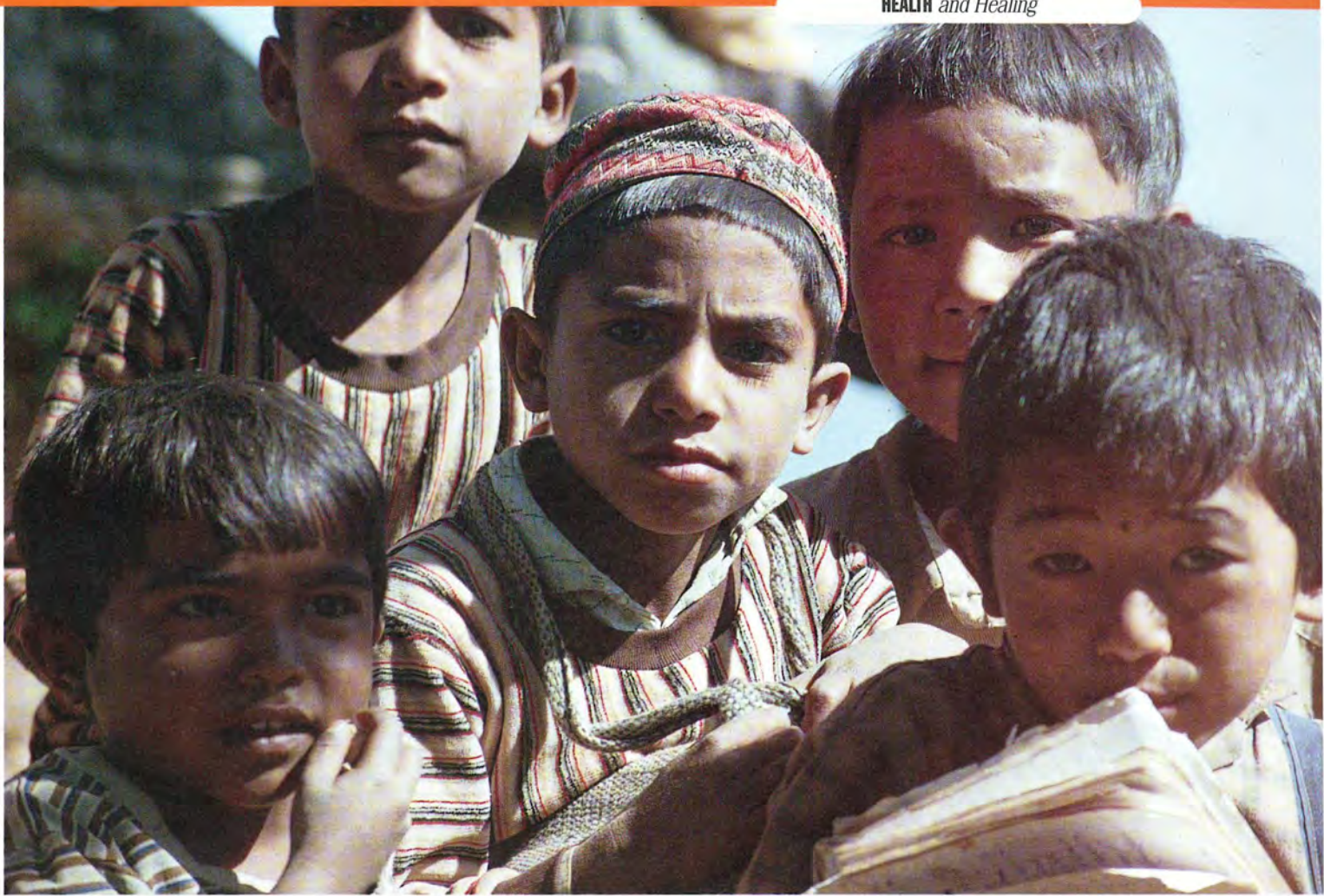
This is the kind of choice facing governments in Nepal and several other countries of Asia. TB is the devastating disease, and it threatens the lives of millions of people in the South East Asia region. Worldwide, about nine million people get TB every year, and perhaps three million die. Many of those affected are young parents - which means the whole family suffers if one parent is sick or dies. About 40 per cent of all the TB sufferers in the world can be found in the ten countries that make up the South East Asia region - which includes India, Bangladesh and Nepal. The choice for these countries is between an expensive but effective TB control programme, and an inexpensive but ineffective one. Unfortunately, many governments find it hard to look beyond the next five years, and the big investment needed now to save the lives of millions in the future is a difficult one to make, given the immediate and pressing needs of their people.



Man with TB in hospital (Thailand)



DHO training in Dhankuta, East Nepal



The strategy for controlling TB has not changed - diagnose people with infectious TB, and cure them quickly before they infect others. The old way of doing this was to give patients a month's medicines at a time, and hope they would take them for the full eight month's course of treatment. Not surprisingly, many gave up after a month or two - they were not cured, the disease came back, and many more people became infected with a type of TB which was now often resistant to the medicines used first time round. Only 50 per cent of people were cured.

The new way is called Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course or DOTS. Simply, it means making absolutely sure that everyone who starts treatment continues right to the end and stays cured! The key is to have a health worker watch the patient take their medicines every day - that's the meaning of Directly Observed Treatment. And it cures over 85 per cent of people with TB.

It also means having a good

health care system which can accurately diagnose people with TB, and a good supply system to ensure that health posts and hospitals never run out of medicines. My job is to help health workers develop these systems for diagnosis, treatment and drug supply, and it takes me to many different and fascinating parts of Asia.

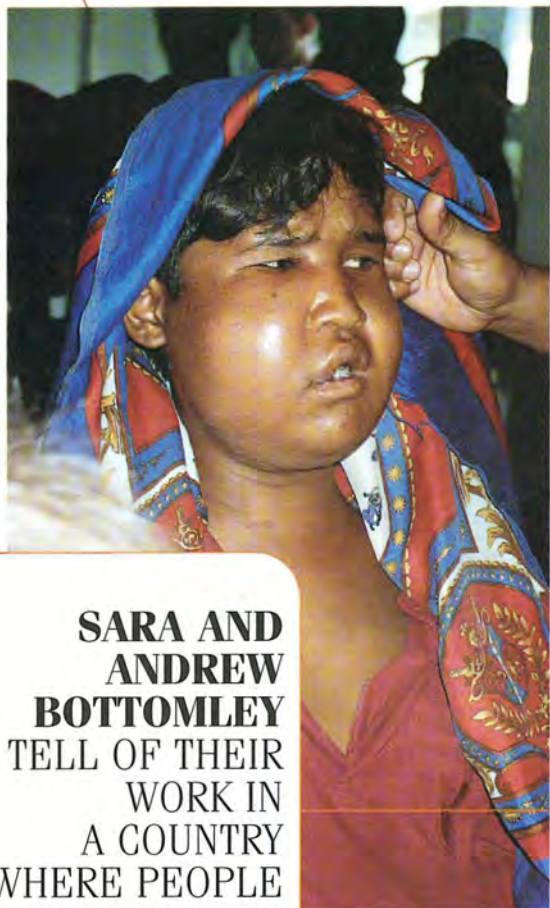
Is this mission? To answer that, I have to ask myself two questions - has God called me, and does this ministry further his kingdom. My answer is Yes to both questions - I am sure that it is what God has called me to - and I am constantly amazed at the ways he provides to enable me to fulfil my responsibilities. I am also sure that this is a way of fighting the works of Satan. "For this purpose Christ was revealed, to destroy all the works of the evil one" (1 John 3:8) - the opening lines of a well-known worship song - and our call is to follow in his footsteps. Fighting TB is just one way we have of furthering his Kingdom. ●

Ian Smith is a BMS missionary seconded to WHO via UMN



Thai TB poster

Dying of toothache



**SARA AND
ANDREW
BOTTOMLEY
TELL OF THEIR
WORK IN
A COUNTRY
WHERE PEOPLE
WANT TO VISIT
THE DENTIST**

PHOTOGRAPHS: SARA BOTTOMLEY



*“Quickly, Andrew, come
and see this poor girl!”*

The urgent tone caused everybody in the temporary dental surgery to spin around. All eyes focused on the crooked figure leaning against the wall. Head wrapped in a scarf, it was difficult to tell whether the patient was an old man or a young girl, but from the grossly deformed face it was obvious to all that he or she was seriously ill.

Fortunately for 20-year-old Gopal, he had stumbled into Beni District Hospital on the first day of a “Health Services Partnership” (or HSP) dental camp.

Dr Andrew Bottomley, International Nepal Fellowship’s dental surgeon, was running a week-long treatment and training camp and was able to give Gopal the life-saving care he needed. Gopal’s abscessed tooth had become severely infected, making his face swell to double its normal size and rendering him unable to speak or breathe easily.

Sadly, Gopal’s case was familiar to the trainees – village health workers who crowded close and discussed similar cases they had encountered at their health posts but had been uncertain how to treat. Andrew used the opportunity to teach the appropriate treatment and necessary surgery.

When HSP staff visit the district hospitals to conduct camps, they do not only engage in treatment. The district’s health post workers, who provide frontline GP care to villages, are invited to attend for training. News of a camp travels fast, and people descend from all around needing treatment. In this way, the community’s immediate and future dental needs are served as their local paramedic is trained. The three trainees at the Beni camp had already completed three of their four-week course, and were joined by others from previous visits who wanted to refresh their skills.

Andrew demonstrating to the trainees how to relocate the jaw after a dislocation. This was a 'special request' lecture.



at the heart of this project is a desire to share the love of Jesus with Nepalis

All of these men can now diagnose tooth problems, extract teeth and provide education for prevention.

The mass of excited people crowding around the clinic betrays the state of oral health in Nepal. Village Nepalis cannot easily leave their fields to make the long journey to a city hospital, resorting instead to their health post worker or district hospital for extractions. But district hospitals have no dentists. Community paramedical training does nothing to meet dental needs, so the HSP believes that, by training these workers to teach and administer good

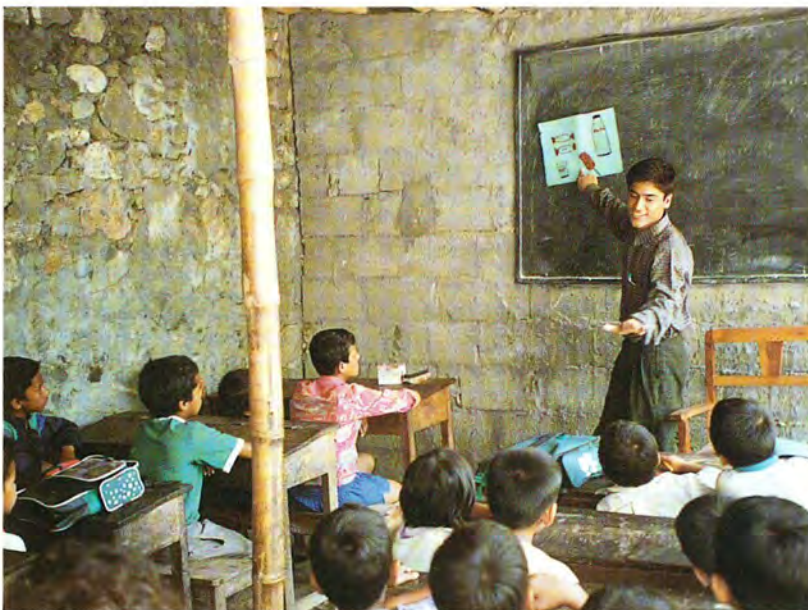
oral care to their community, thousands of lives can be improved.

HSP has chosen six districts to focus on. They offer doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, nurses, medical laboratory technicians and technicians to visit the hospitals serving those districts. These people are forging relationships with staff as they instill new skills, inject enthusiasm and encourage nationals to stay serving in their posts. They believe they will catch the vision for making their hospitals function and requests for training now exceed their capacity to provide!

The Health Services Partnership project represents the International Nepal Fellowship's response to the needs of the Nepali national health service which operates through a referral chain from health post to regional hospital. Isolated district hospitals and their satellite health posts are struggling against numerous problems. Poorly paid doctors prefer to work in the cities where they can supplement their income through private practice, leaving many district hospitals doctorless and staff demoralised for long periods. Water and meagre supplies of medicines usually have to be carried in, after a long wait! Unreliable electrical supply and fair wear and tear mean damaged or underused equipment. Hospital technicians often have few skills or the tools necessary for even simple repairs. The technical branch of HSP encourages maintenance staff to "build up broken things", teaching to care and repair by providing basic tool kits.

But at the heart of this project is a desire to share the love of Jesus with Nepalis. As well as having sick bodies many patients have sick hearts and yearn to know God's love. ●

Sara and Andrew Bottomley are both working in Nepal with the International Nepal Fellowship



Trainee Laxman teaching local children how to look after their teeth

JENNY BARRETT TAKES A LOOK AT HERBALISM AROUND THE WORLD

Chronic shortages of doctors and medicines mean that most people in developing countries must look to herbalists and other traditional practitioners to satisfy their primary health care needs. Most Chinese hospitals have herbal dispensaries, and in India the use of herbal drugs is taken for granted. In 1996, there were ten times as many traditional practitioners as medical doctors in Ghana, with only one doctor for every 20,000 people. Sudan and Swaziland could boast one medical doctor per 10,000 population, and yet there were 100 times more practitioners offering help by traditional methods.

Natural medicine got its start in Jamaica during the 18th century, when slaves brought over from Africa adapted their traditional techniques to suit the plants and trees of the Caribbean. Now some 50 per cent of the 2.5 million population use herbs - mostly because they cannot afford other forms of treatment. In rural areas of the island, more and more people are growing their own herbs or scouring the roadside for medicinal plants - even the bark of the cashew tree has been known to help control diabetes. A herbal doctor in Stony Hill, St Andrew claims she can cure anything from venereal diseases to the common cold - for a fraction of the US\$30 Jamaicans would normally pay if they visited a doctor. Medicines to control asthma or diabetes can cost up to \$100 a month - the minimum wage in Jamaica where unemployment runs at over 16 per cent.

According to BMS missionary Gwen Hunter, the Democratic Republic of Congo is rich in herbs - and herbalists. Some years back a doctor who worked at Kimpese examined 800 different plants used in medical treatment by herbalists

in his area - and started using the 300 he found of use in his own practice.

Gwen remembers several years ago driving to Kinshasa with a number of students: "One of them became travel sick and asked me to stop the car, whereupon she descended, ran over to a nearby tree, pulled off a handful of leaves, chewed them and then boarded the vehicle and we went on with her in a good state of health. These leaves probably contained an antispasmodic or maybe an antiemetic."

"In our area" reports Gwen, "plants are used to treat (successfully) worms, amoebic dysentery, liver problems, malaria, sickness, diarrhoea, certain heart conditions and other ailments. Unfortunately herbalists (medicine men) often keep their knowledge to themselves and perhaps pass it on to members of their family who work with them. There is very little written down and well known herbalists who have built up their treatment centre and the confidence of the local population have died, taking all their expertise to the grave with them."

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that, around the world, herbalism is three to four times more commonly practised than conventional medicine. To integrate the two, on a scientific basis, is the task of WHO's Traditional Medicine Programme - and, according to Gwen, things are changing: "There is a move afoot for doctors and pharmacists to work more closely together with the local herbalists in each area, sharing information and know how. It is much cheaper for the patient and, with the sources being regular and reliable, the availability would be much improved." ●

"And the leaves are for the healing of the nations"



Childbirth in Nepal

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE TOLD BY
KATRINA BUTTERWORTH, DOCTOR
AND BMS MISSIONARY



Emergency department,
Western Regional Hospital, Nepal



Pharmacy department,
Tansen Hospital, Nepal



Nurse with 'drug' trolley
at Amp Pipal Hospital, Nepal

At 4.00 am after a night kept sleepless by fighting off mosquitoes and occasional mild contractions, I was transferred from the midwife-led birthing centre to the labour ward. After a few moments of horror when I was told to sit on a bed in a corridor while my husband, Martin, was forbidden even to walk through the doors, I was shown into a side room with two other ladies. Perhaps I should say two other patients, as each of them had a friend sleeping on the floor beside them. In Nepal, midwives and nurses do technical work and much of what we in Britain think of as nursing care is done by relatives. As Martin was my only relative in Nepal a special concession was made to let him sit with me. Men are not usually allowed on the labour ward. It was an answer to prayer that Martin was allowed to stay with me throughout.

When nothing had happened by 7.00 am, Martin went home to fetch breakfast. Meals are the responsibility of relatives as only medical care is provided by the hospital. People bring in their own paraffin stoves to make cups of tea and cook food. Martin not being the most wonderful cook in the world, I felt especially blessed by the thoughtfulness and care of both Nepali and expatriate friends who sent in supplies throughout my hospital stay.

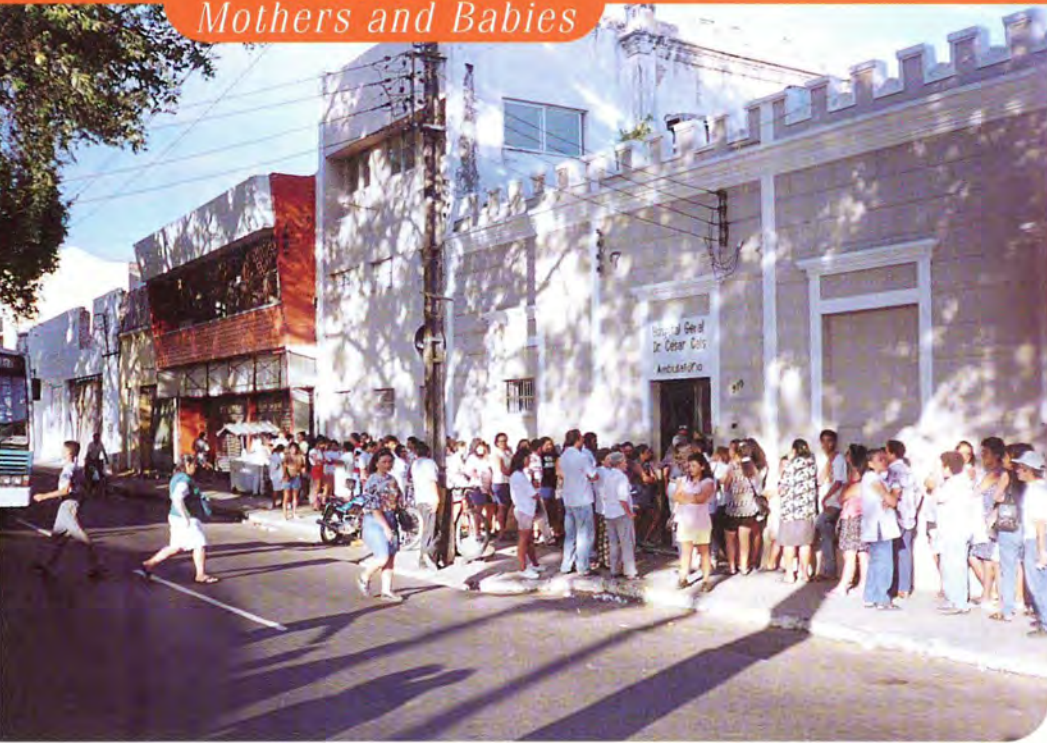
The doctor's round was interesting, being on the receiving end for a change. Nepali staff, both doctors and midwives, I found to be extremely competent but no-one ever explained anything to me. As a doctor myself I could work out what was going on most of the time and luckily my Nepali is sufficient to ask questions and understand the answers. In Nepal medical professionals are all seeing and all knowing; patients just do as they're told.

I was given some medicine to induce labour, as my waters had broken the day before and nothing else had happened. Martin was given a form to go down and get replacement medicines. This entailed queuing at the cashiers to pay, then queuing at the pharmacy to collect the medicine. Every investigation done or medication received while in hospital needs to be paid for by the patient before leaving.

Things happened fairly quickly after that. I already knew that the only pain relief available for labour in Nepal was a drug called pethidine. However, when I felt I needed it my request was met by a shrug of the shoulders and the reply there was no doctor to sign the authorisation. Not very helpful! Fortunately, five minutes later I started to push and after a total labour of just seven hours our daughter, Ruth Shanti, was born.

Childbirth in Nepal was certainly an experience. Both Martin and I felt surrounded by prayer and very aware of God's presence throughout. I feel Ruth's birth has given me a much deeper understanding of Nepali culture and local expectations of the medical system. ●

Katrina Butterworth first arrived in Nepal in January 1997.
She works alongside her husband, Martin, who is a mechanical engineer.



Holding the baby

MARY PARSONS TELLS OF A SPECIAL PROJECT THAT IS SAVING THE LIVES OF MOTHERS AND BABIES IN NORTH-EASTERN BRAZIL

The early morning silence is shattered by a merciless ringing of the alarm clock. 3.00 am. Tereza sleepily climbed out of her hammock as she remembered the reason for waking at this unsociable hour. She had to visit the maternity hospital. An early start was necessary to get a place in the queue. 4.00 am and Tereza was in line at the hospital ready to book an antenatal appointment. The clinic staff opened the doors at 6.30 am. There were about 15 people in front of Tereza. "Will I be seen today?" she wondered.

Tereza is one of hundreds of women all over the city of Fortaleza in north-eastern Brazil who climbed out of sleep at this early hour to make their first antenatal appointment. Some would go to the Health Posts close to home; others chose one of the maternity hospitals. Tereza managed to see the doctor the same day by staying at the hospital until 3.00 pm.

It was fortunate for her that she lived close to the Save the Child Project (PSAC) run

by the Baptist Hospital of Fortaleza. She had appeared at PSAC a week previously with a scan result that revealed she had a twin pregnancy. The Baptist hospital has no maternity unit. She was therefore advised to go to the Medical School Maternity Hospital, because of the special circumstances of her pregnancy. She will continue at PSAC for routine appointments while using backup care from the Maternity Hospital.

Debora is 14 years old. She is underweight and has anaemia; factors which put Debora and her unborn baby into a high risk category. The PSAC antenatal clinics and classes provide

information on how she should care for herself, prepare for the birth of her baby, breast feed, as well as hygiene, diet, immunisation programmes, and family planning.

After the baby's birth there will be baby care talks.





Ana Maria booked at the PSAC early in her pregnancy. She began to show signs of pre-eclampsia - a condition which, if ignored could put mother and baby at risk; and so careful monitoring of her blood pressure was necessary. At the end of her pregnancy her blood pressure was high, and she was referred to hospital. They monitored her for an hour, and then sent her home. It was a surprise to see her at the clinic two days later with her blood pressure still dangerously high. This time Ana Maria was sent to the Medical School Hospital where she had an emergency caesarean section. A month later both mother and baby were making good progress.

Ana Maria will attend the baby clinic and postnatal classes until her baby is six months old.

The work began in 1989, at a time when the infant mortality rate in Brazil was 61 per 1,000 live births, with the state of Ceará, which is where Fortaleza is located, higher than the national average. By 1996 that rate was 46 per 1,000 live births.

Five thousand, three hundred and fifty women have benefitted from the care and classes offered through the Save the Child Project - expressing the love of God in a practical way. ●

Mary Parsons is a nurse, working with the BMS in Fortaleza.



Mike Pilavachi



Choices - decisions

The hunt is on today for self-fulfilment and for self-expression. There are courses everywhere on "discovering your gifts", "maximising your potential" and "finding the real you". This quest has found its way into the Church; we have seminars on "Free to be", conferences on discovering our spiritual gifts and counselling to help us be all we were meant to be. There is nothing wrong with any of these emphases, as long as they do not become ends in themselves. For the Christian, to discover my spiritual gifts is to discover how I am called to serve. To divorce the quest for self-discovery from the quest for service is to retreat into self-centred introspection which leads to spiritual death. It is when I lose my life that I find it. My identity is not in my abilities but in my position in the family of God as a child of God. This is practically worked out by the way I serve others. Spiritual gifts are not badges we wear or trophies in a cupboard, but tools for us to use.

I write this the day after returning from a youth camp in the north east of England, attended by over 1,000 young people. I saw much which encouraged me there but the biggest encouragement came from a conversation with a young man of seventeen. I asked him in passing what he planned to do with his life. He replied without hesitation "Be a missionary!". He then explained that after A levels he planned to go to university to study structural engineering in order to "build bridges and things" in the third world. I asked him how long he had felt like this and he told me it had been for over a year. In fact, this had been the basis for his A level choices. This is how it should be for all God's people, not only for those who use their medical gifts to serve the Lord by serving the poor in the third world, but for each one of us.

"Your attitude should be like that of Christ Jesus, who did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant . . ."

Philippians 2:5-7

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

Project Updates

Arise and Build! Project 96



Raising money for church planting and evangelism in Zimbabwe.

As at the end of July 97 the total raised was £21,444.63.

PROJECT 97 a piece of the ACTION

Raising money to support the work of Action Teams.

As at the end of July 97 the total raised was £3,396.40.

Second couple leave for Portugal



Following swiftly on the heels of Kevin and Linda Donaghy, who with their daughter Anna left the UK to prepare for church planting work in Portugal in the summer, BMS missionaries Keith and Barbara Hodges have also arrived in Portugal.

Keith and Barbara previously spent 26 years working in different parts of Brazil. After a period of reorientation their basic ministry will be teaching in the Baptist Seminary at Queluz, a city with 80,000 people, about ten miles west of Lisbon.

News in Brief

News



Landslide, Mizoram

BMS Relief Fund makes two new grants

The BMS Relief Fund has recently made two grants to help relieve suffering and distress in areas of Asia devastated by tornadoes and floods.

The first grant of £5,000 was made to the Baptist Church of Mizoram Relief and Development Department to help with medical and food aid following continuous heavy rainfall, landslides and floods. These destroyed many villages and left thousands of people homeless. The flooding has also contributed to the spread of diarrhoea and malaria.

Tornado damage, Bangladesh



The second grant of £18,071 will help relief work in the aftermath of tornadoes and cyclones which hit Bangladesh earlier this year. The money will be used to help repair a school and houses for at least 250 families, and will help with the sinking of a well.

The BMS Relief Fund is able to respond quickly to requests such as these from partner bodies when donations to the Fund have previously been received. For more information speak to BMS Resources Assistant Rob Vaines on 01235 512077, and ask for the Relief Fund leaflet and gift envelopes.

Would you take the risk?

Take
the
Risk

BMS will be coming to a place near you during the 98 tour!
Will you take the risk?
See Jan m/b for more details...

Former missionaries reunite

Eighty seven former BMS missionaries who had served in all parts of the world met in June for a Reunion Weekend at Hothorpe Hall, Leicestershire.

Former Brazilian missionary Boyd Williams spoke of his reluctance to stay in the UK after returning

from Brazil, and how he had a change of heart as a world of nationalities, needs and potential came to his church in Southall.

Newest former missionary Valerie Hamilton gave news of the church in Bangladesh, particularly the work of Sunday Schools.

During the course of the weekend two offerings were taken for BMS work: £292 was given for general work, and £312 for the BMS Relief Fund.

The Reunion was organised by Neil and Marjorie McVicar, former missionaries in Bangladesh.

BMS supports Bulgaria

The BMS has made a grant of £18,740 to Baptists in Bulgaria to help support pastors in their work.

Bulgaria, at this time, faces a deep economic crisis, but churches are growing. Fifty three people were baptised in just two services in Sofia during one month in the summer. Theo Angelov, President of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria reports that in the church at Sliven, which was only planted six years ago, he baptised 18 new believers; and 65 new Christians have been baptised in another church consisting of Turks and former Muslims.

Although the membership of the Bulgarian Baptist Union has grown by around 15 per cent in a matter of months, many places still do not have a pastor. The pastors that there are are only paid the equivalent of US \$60 to \$70 per month, which will not even pay their heating bills in winter.

STOP PRESS:

BMS hits your screen in December, joining forces with the BBC for a Christmas Songs of Praise special. The theme of the programme will be "People carrying Christ's love to the poorest children in the world" and will feature the BMS 28:19 India Team Sarah, Louise, Jonathan and Dave. It will be broadcast on 7 December, and will be shown to approx six million viewers in the UK plus others in Europe and across the world via the BBC Select Cable Channel. Apply now for tickets for the UK recording to be held on 23 November at Finsbury Park. Ring Judith Gregory, BBC Religious Programmer on 0161 244 3258.

Action Teams



The 1997/98 Action Teams will be overseas, working with BMS missionaries and partner churches by the time you read this. This year teams have gone to Brazil, Zimbabwe, France, Italy, India, Thailand and Portugal, and one team is working in the UK.

If you are interested in having an Action Team come to your church on their return next year, please contact your BMS Co-ordinator who is booking their tour.

Baptist House News

Welcome to Katrina Dando

After a long time of searching on the part of BMS Katrina Dando has been appointed as Publicity Manager. Katrina comes from a background of business studies and marketing, and previously worked as Business Development Manager for Smith and Nephew in Birmingham.

"I'm looking forward to getting to know the team," she said, "and together taking BMS into the 21st century. That may require some changes, but if BMS is to grow and remain at the forefront of mission, it has to be accessible to the people who will take it forward into the next century.

"I'm excited about what God has planned for BMS and how he will use the skills and gifts he has given me for this purpose."



Carolyn Cole

Carolyn started her new job as Volunteer Co-ordinator by jumping in at the deep end. On her first day, after a short induction at Didcot, she travelled to North Wales to take part in residential training for the 1997/98

Action Teams. She is a member of Gorsley Chapel, trained at All Nations Christian College, and has worked overseas with Latin Link and YWAM. Her responsibilities will include BMS volunteers as well as the Action Teams.

Fiona Pimlott

Fiona is the new Youth and Children's Co-ordinator, and comes to BMS from CMS, where she was Events Administrator for the Education and Training Team. Her work will include responsibility for the children's WOW programme, including WOW magazine, the WOW fund-raising project, children's Action Days, youth roadshows and all other youth activities.



Stephen Fisher

Stephen has taken up the newly created position of Receipting and Records Supervisor in the Department of Finance and Administration. Stephen was previously Regional Co-ordinator for Workable, a charity providing employment for the disabled, and has also been a Personnel Business Manager at Barclays Bank.

Kathy Kavanagh

Kathy is the new secretary to the Missionary Support Manager. She previously worked for the Milton Keynes Development Corporation both as a secretary and in community development, and for the Open University. In her spare time she helps run a Crusader's Youth Club with her husband.



News

Azerbaijan

Karl Heinz Walter, General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation, has written a letter of protest to President Heidar Aliev of Azerbaijan following a report that Pastor Zaur Balaev and a deacon from Aliabad Baptist Church, Azerbaijan had been arrested. It is alleged that the two men had been imprisoned solely because of their responsible positions within the Baptist Church. (EPBS)

Argentina

Bishop Federico J Pagura, former head of the Methodist Church in Argentina has been presented with the second annual human rights award of the U.S. National Council of Churches, for his "untiring efforts" in defence of human rights throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. At the award presentation it was said of him, "He is a visionary and a poet; a humble man who has the capacity of building bridges for dialogue without abandoning the firmness of his convictions." (ENIB)

World Baptists

The latest statistics from the Baptist World Alliance show that worldwide the number of Baptists total 41,730,511 worshipping in 157,117 churches. European Baptists had a total of 10,592 churches and 774,235 members. (EBPS)

Belgium

Following the General Secretary of the Belgian Baptist Union Samuel Verhaeghe's direct appeal for the discrimination against Belgian Baptists to end, the Belgian government has agreed that the BBU become a member of the United Protestant Church and as such be recognised by the government.

Guam

Trans World Radio personnel, whose main office, studio and medium-wave station are located in Guam, only one and a half miles from the crash site of Korean Airlines KA801 aeroplane, unexpectedly found themselves involved in events following the crash. Their office became a temporary counselling site for rescue workers and a dropping-off point for supplies. They also handed out meals and helped family members who had come to the crash site to view the scene. (TWR)



Jose Perez proudly showing his new limbs

Sealegs helps cripples stand proud again

Although the fighting ended years ago, Nicaragua still has thousands of landmines littering the countryside, and regularly claiming victims among field workers and children at play.

Among those helped in the Operation Sea Legs programme was ten-year-old Jose Perez, who lost both his feet to an exploding landmine. Relatives made a 13-hour journey with the boy to see if the Mercy Ships team could help him. Another patient was a young girl who had been reduced to begging in the streets of Managua, after she was blown up and crippled.

The arrival of the portable unit marked the end of a seven year project for prosthetist Paul Moehring, a former dental lab technician, who oversaw the development of the \$280,000 custom-designed and equipped centre. It has its own self-contained clinic,

design studio and fitting room and is equipped with computer-aided design equipment, a vertical lathe and an industrial oven for producing on-the-spot tailor-made limbs within a few hours.

Whilst waiting at the clinic patients are shown the Jesus film on video, and several of them have become Christians. The unit will stay for another six months in Leon and will then be shipped to other parts of Central America. (YWAM)



PHOTOGRAPHS: MERCY SHIPS, TEXAS

Above: Mobile clinic adjacent to Teaching Hospital in Leon, Nicaragua

Right: Prosthetist Larry Jones shaping a limb in the clinic

But a pioneering rehabilitation programme called Operation Sea Legs has brought hope and a new life to affected adults

and children, previously shunned and unable to work after losing lower limbs. They have been fitted with free new false legs and feet in a mobile prosthetics unit created by Mercy Ships, Youth With A Mission's maritime division.

Around 100 amputees have been fitted with new lower limbs from the high tech unit - housed in a converted 40 ft container in the city of Leon. The prosthetics are fitted for around \$325 each, a tenth of the typical cost in the United States.



News in Brief

JETS takes off

The Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS) is the only officially registered interdenominational theological seminary in the Arab world. It was registered earlier this year, with its papers officially signed by the Jordanian Minister of Culture. And the story of how the vision of one man, Imad N Shehadeh, brought this seminary into being has been hailed as a miracle. Dr Shehadeh is pastor of a Baptist church in Amman, Jordan as well as Founder and President of the Seminary. He was born into a Palestinian Greek Orthodox family, and studied medicine in the United States where he became a converted Christian. He felt a call into ministry and went back to Jordan after his Bachelor degrees, to work with Campus Crusade for Christ for five years. Dr Shehadeh was convinced that the deepest need in the Middle East was educated leadership, and so he did the necessary academic work to fulfil his vision of founding a seminary in Jordan.

In 1990, along with a couple of other people, he sought permission from the government to run such a seminary. Together they started an unregistered school in 1992, but this was closed by the government. In 1994 he started teaching courses in a Baptist church, thinking that inside the church he would be allowed to train Christian leadership. But the Jordanian authorities said: "You are not doing church work", and closed it down.

"One of the officials told me not to even dream of getting approval for a seminary in a Muslim country," Dr Shehadeh said, "And the Jordanian evangelical church

leadership asked me to forget the idea. This was one of the worst moments on the way."

But then a change in the government leadership came about, and the seminary was allowed to register. The last problem that the Minister of Culture raised was that in his view one thing was missing from the Constitution and Bylaws. He called it 'interfaith dialogue' which meant allowing Muslims to sit in the same classes and receive the same training that Christians would receive. "To him it was an intellectual endeavour", said Dr Shehadeh, "to us it was permission to train Muslim converts in serving the Saviour" and added, "All in all we got everything we dreamed of, and more."

JETS is supported by five evangelical denominations in Jordan, including The Baptist Convention. In 1997, 77 students studied there, 32 of them women. (EBPS)

Sorrow over "great suffering" opens doors for friendship

There are no known Christians among the 47,000 Tartars in the Ukraine - descendants of the White Horde, an offshoot of Genghis Khan's army that swept across Asia and Europe. Settling in the Crimea they mixed with the Turks from whom they adopted Islam and much of their culture.

But an opportunity has now arisen to start Bible discussion groups among Tartars after Youth With A Mission worker Sasha Karabin publicly expressed his regret for the 1944 deportation of thousands of

Tartars from Russia, over half of whom died on their way to Siberia or Central Asia. Karabin, the Ukrainian nephew of two KGB officers serving at the time of the mass relocation, addressed an annual rally in the Black Sea port city of Yalta, famous for the 1945 meeting of Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt at the end of World War Two, and asked for the people's forgiveness for what had



Annual Rally in Yalta commemorating the 1944 deportation of Tartars from Russia

happened.

"It's had a very positive effect in building relationships with Tartar people in the area," said Jerry Perkins, YWAM ministry director in Yalta. "No one has ever apologised for the great suffering the Tartars have endured. Just the small act of hearing your former enemy say, 'I was wrong and I'm sorry' has a way of defusing decades of hatred and division."

The YWAM team have been offered the use of a library in a nearby town for discussions about the Bible and the Koran, and given the use of a cafe frequented by members of the Tartar community to present the gospel through music and drama. (YWAM)

Alistair Brown



Unique and precious?

An old villager hobbles along a road in rural south India. His white hair, ragged clothing, bare feet, bowed legs and stick show his age and poverty. His life has been quiet - he's raised his children, grown his crops, and never travelled more than ten miles from his home. Yet it's also been eventful. He's known children dying, terrible storms, failed crops, desperate hunger.

Apart from immediate family, no-one's ever cared much for this old man. Why should they? He's just one of hundreds of millions.

Christians see him, though, as a unique, loved child of God. So he matters, doesn't he? He's worth our time, our money, our care, our gospel, isn't he? Or are those words more fine theory than reality? So far that man hasn't had any Christian's time, money, care or gospel. Nor have the other hundreds of millions. How much he and they matter to us isn't a matter of theory, it's a matter of action.



PHOTOGRAPHS: VIZ-A-VIZ

The party never stops

Members of Westbourne Park Baptist Church and summer evangelism project 'One in a Million' co-ordinated by Viz-A-Viz joined forces over the August Bank Holiday weekend to reach out to people coming to London for the Notting Hill Carnival.

Thousands of people visited Westbourne Grove and Westbourne Park Baptist Church over the weekend to join in the fun with children's entertainment, face painting,



live music, theatre and free use of toilets!

Prior to the event the team had received training in all aspects of the carnival from practical workshops to One to One evangelism training.

"The Carnival is a unique opportunity for evangelism" said Dennis Pethers of Viz-A-Viz. "Not only do we have a ready-made crowd, but people have time to talk and are prepared to not only enjoy the performance, but consider what we are doing it for."

The evening events, called "The Party Never Stops", took place after the carnival, and provided an opportunity for people of all ages to join in with the celebrations and to be challenged with the gospel.

Rain dashes hopes for cross Wales walk

Rev'd Haydn Davies, minister of the Maesyrrhelem group of churches based in Llanbadarn Fynydd, had plans to walk across Wales to raise money for BMS and for electrical repairs on a local manse.

The day began for the walkers at 2.00 am, and by 4.00 am they had been bussed to the start at Borth on the Welsh coast. But the rain came down, and continued to fall. Every walker was soaked

through. At one point a stream across the path was too wide to jump over, and so everyone waded through it - with water up to their knees. Because of the rain the walk had to be called off before they reached Plynlimon. Haydn Davies only walked 18 of the scheduled 45 miles, but still managed to raise £575, of which £287.50 has been sent to BMS to support the group's PIPS project.

99 not out

BMS Birthday Scheme secretaries come and go, but Winnie Terry of Eythorne Baptist Church, Kent probably holds the record for being the oldest Birthday Scheme secretary in the country.

At the age of 99 she still proudly orders 60 birthday cards and gift envelopes at a time, as she has been doing for the last 25 years. She took on the role when the then pastor's wife said to her one day, "There you are Miss Terry; you'd make a good secretary" and then promptly handed her the Birthday Scheme register.



Winnie says that until then she had not been particularly interested in mission, but that moment marked the beginning of her interest in and support for BMS and mission in general.

However Winnie now believes it is time for her to hand the register on to someone else, and she will be retiring at the end of the year.



Sketty isn't scatty about Globetrotter Project

The children of Sketty Baptist Church, Swansea raised £50 for the BMS Globetrotter project by making and selling bookmarks and biscuits as part of their Sunday School Anniversary celebrations.

Norfolk church gets new members on board for mission

Fakenham Baptist Church are keen to introduce their new members to all aspects of church life and witness as early as possible. That is why the Missionary Secretary telephones BMS regularly for literature to put into the new members' packs. If you would like more information on BMS for new church members contact Rob Vaines, BMS Resources Assistant on 01235 512077.

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

ission Link

Dates for your Diary

Events and Meetings

Tuesday 10 November

Women's Missionary Fellowship,
Adelaide Place Baptist Church, Glasgow
Contact Jan Watson 0141 882 1201

Saturday 15 November

Havering and Dagenham BMS Support Group
Autumn Meeting
Contact Robert Green 01708 227261

**Merseyside BMS Autumn Meeting,
St Helen's Baptist Church**

Contact Merrill Morgan 0151256 0209

Wednesday 19 November

Gwent WMS Autumn Meeting,
Hanbury Baptist Church, Bargoed
Contact Sylvia Hamer 01495 225932

Friday - Saturday 21-22 November

"RSVP" Mission Event,
Findlay Memorial Church, Glasgow
Contact Derek Clark 0141 775 1201

Wednesday 3 December

Women's Prayer Fellowship,
Adelaide Place Baptist Church, Glasgow
Contact Freda Kennedy 0141 632 0883

Monday 8 December

Women's Missionary Fellowship,
Adelaide Place Baptist Church Glasgow
Contact Jean Watson 0141 882 1201

Saturday 3 January

Leicester Auxiliary New Year Prayer Meeting
Contact Theo Lambourne 0116 271 3633

Monday 12 January

Women's Missionary Fellowship,
Adelaide Place Baptist Church, Glasgow
Contact Jean Watson 0141 882 1201

New church has missionary vision

A church in Wales that has just celebrated its first birthday has sent a cheque to BMS for £1,000 - representing its first-ever missionary giving.

Brackla Baptist Church is situated on one of the largest private housing estates in Europe. There was no church there when American Southern Baptist missionaries Bill and Lucy Pat Curl moved in five years ago, and drew together a group of people for worship in the local school. At its formal constitution last October, the membership stood at 12, but now it has a membership of 38, with around 70 attending services. Bill and Lucy Pat are now Associate ministers, the church having called a full-time pastor, a Welshman, Ian Howells as well as another Associate minister Seth Collier.

At the end of the first year the congregation felt it was appropriate to give away one-tenth of their income, and chose BMS as the recipient for this. Former BMS Co-ordinator Sue Wilson was invited to receive the cheque and speak about the Society.

Dear Audrey

No letters from the post bag this month but a reminder - Have you included World Mission in your Christmas programme?

It's not too late to start - here's a few ideas to get you thinking:

Find out ways Christians in other countries celebrate Christmas, get the young people to make a display. Could you introduce some of the customs into the church celebration? Or you could raise money for a special overseas project.

This is the time of the year when everyone is thinking about babies; get some facts about child birth from other countries, and decide what action your church could take about what you've discovered - the Nestle campaign is still a live issue. Look around your own community; is there a special need that your church could help financially or practically?

If you are following a theme make sure information about other countries - the good and the not so good - is included, so that all you do has a world dimension, (you'll find *mb* and missionaries' prayer letters good sources of information).

Arrange a telephone link with your Link-Up missionary. And if you can't make it for the Christmas service, how about doing something at the beginning of January?

Suggest a year's subscription to *mb* for a Christmas present; and raise money for the work of world mission through BMS by encouraging the buying of items from the BMS Christmas catalogue.

AND - Make sure you've signed and sent a Christmas card to your Link-Up missionary and any others you know at this time who are a long way from their families!

Green light

JANE ALDRICK
VISITED STEVE GREEN
TO ASK ABOUT HIS
GO AHEAD ATTITUDE
TO LIFE AND MISSION

A doctor for 23 years Steve Green has a BMS missionary heritage as long as your arm. Great great grandfather John Wenger served in India in the early 1800s; so did Steve's maternal grandparents, uncles and aunts on both sides, and his mother was born there. Small wonder that this fourth of five children, born into a hectic manse, had hypermetropia (long sight!)

Steve, always sporty, musical and bright, quickly set his heart on becoming a doctor. In his late teens his 'call' began to crystallise on hearing Dr David Wilson, then a returning missionary from Zaire, speaking in Leeds.

Medical training followed at St Andrew's and Dundee, with plenty of time for First-11 football, CU activities and meeting, later marrying Carolyn (past President of BMS). As a couple they are both highly individual and very much a team. Sons, Andrew and Barnabas, came later.

Steve Green quickly struck me as a Man with a Mission. No sooner had he married and qualified than he was champing at the bit to go overseas. Initially applying for a job in the Yemen; then, later to BMS, it seemed God was really checking his willingness to go anywhere, at any time. To leave exams, career progression, everything?

As it turned out Steve and his growing family stayed in the UK, he gained his MRCP and in 1979 the Greens re-approached BMS offering an open-ended call - anywhere.



Steve Green



Ongoing medical work in Kimpese:
Above - 4th year medical student
Top left - child's chest examination
Left - dentists at work

However, he does admit to secretly buying a 'Teach Yourself Punjabi' handbook!

Less than a year later Steve was standing out in the middle of Zaire's equatorial rain-forest, staring up into a sharp, starry sky, when he heard himself say: "This is what I've always wanted to do." Pimu had a tiny two-doctor hospital of 80 beds, and between them Adrian Hopkins, Steve and a trusty textbook (!) operated on whatever came through the door.

Twelve months later the Greens moved to Kimpese, 220 km south-west of Kinshasa, where they stayed for ten years. A town of 25,000 people whose large 400 bed hospital included staff from Canada, Sweden and the United States. Ideal for a gregarious couple! Mainly involved with paediatrics, community health, and teaching, Steve also undertook a four year mother and child AIDS research project funded by the Medical Research Council and another three and a half years major research project on paediatric salmonella. Together Steve and Carolyn set up and ran a French-speaking church for this spiritually aware, story-telling society.

Zaire's civil unrest began to seriously bite in September 1991. Soldiers were on the rampage. Colleagues were being evacuated but the Greens chose to stay, not sensing danger in Kimpese. However in October 1991 a truckload of soldiers passed the hospital. They were on the rampage. The sound of distant gunfire rang through the air and the missionaries were

at risk. Each packed a bag that night facing up to the possibility that they might have to leave with nothing. Several days later Steve and Carolyn left their Kimpese home of ten years carrying only a suitcase.

Steve's gifts as a trainer and encourager bore fruit as both hospital and church were now well-equipped and trained to be run by nationals. It was time to go.

Returning to Leeds the Green family were re-united. Gradually Steve went back into NHS clinical medical work, and in May 1994 was appointed as Consultant Paediatrician in Bradford. Last year he also became head of Paediatric Services there.

Today life in the Green house is far from pedestrian! As the new Chairman of BMS' Medical Advisory Group Steve sees his role as "listening to what God has to say - a real privilege." He wants to think ahead - to think laterally as BMS, "a good, caring Society" faces tomorrow's tremendous medical needs.

Locally Steve and Carolyn head up the team that runs a Baptist church plant in the Leeds suburbs. For relaxation Steve sings tenor in Musici Jubilantes (a Christian orchestra and choir); Carolyn is doing a law degree, and their children? Andrew (23) is at St Andrew's studying Russian and French and Barnabas (21) is at Medical School in Newcastle.

So, the Green family baton is passed on. ●

Massy

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

BY **PHIL & ROSEMARY HALLIDAY**



History

Massy owes its name to a gentleman called Matius who built a house there in the Gallo Roman period. The house was referred to as "Maciacus" in the beginning, but the word evolved and changed and, in the course of time, became Massy.

Situated an hour's carriage-ride away from Paris, Massy became a holiday resort in the 15th century for those who enjoyed the countryside. In the early 1900s, Massy was still a quiet village of only 1200 inhabitants, cultivating crops, fruit and vines. The development of the town began in 1958, following a government decision. Today Massy is the third largest town in its "department", Essonne, and the most prosperous.

Massy as it is now

Massy is an urban town of 48,000 inhabitants situated 10 miles south of the

Paris ring road or "périphérique". With two RER train stations, a TGV station, a coach station and immediate access to the A6 and A10 motorways, Massy is home for a good number of people who work elsewhere in the Greater Paris area. The town has its own industrial estate, too, which includes a Honeywell Bull factory and a printing house where several national newspapers are printed. There are also three shopping complexes, a swimming pool, a sports centre, an urban park, a cinema, a theatre and an opera house.

Social aspects

The great majority of Massy's inhabitants, the "Massicois", live in apartment blocks. These structures, made of reinforced concrete, massively outnumber the few houses which remain from the beginning of the century.



Church life

Although there are many people in Massy who come from families which have been French for generations, many others come from a different ethnic background and have gained French nationality relatively recently. The names on the apartment blocks show that the residents come from Arab, African, Asian or different European backgrounds (Portuguese, Spanish, German, Italian and even British!). Currently 20 per cent of the "Massicois" are from an immigrant background.

The social profile of Massy is very mixed, therefore, with a rich and diverse community life. The Massy Fair is an annual event in which more than 150 groups take part, including PTAs, charities, sports clubs of all types, choirs and orchestras, ethnic identity groups, language clubs, political parties and religious associations.

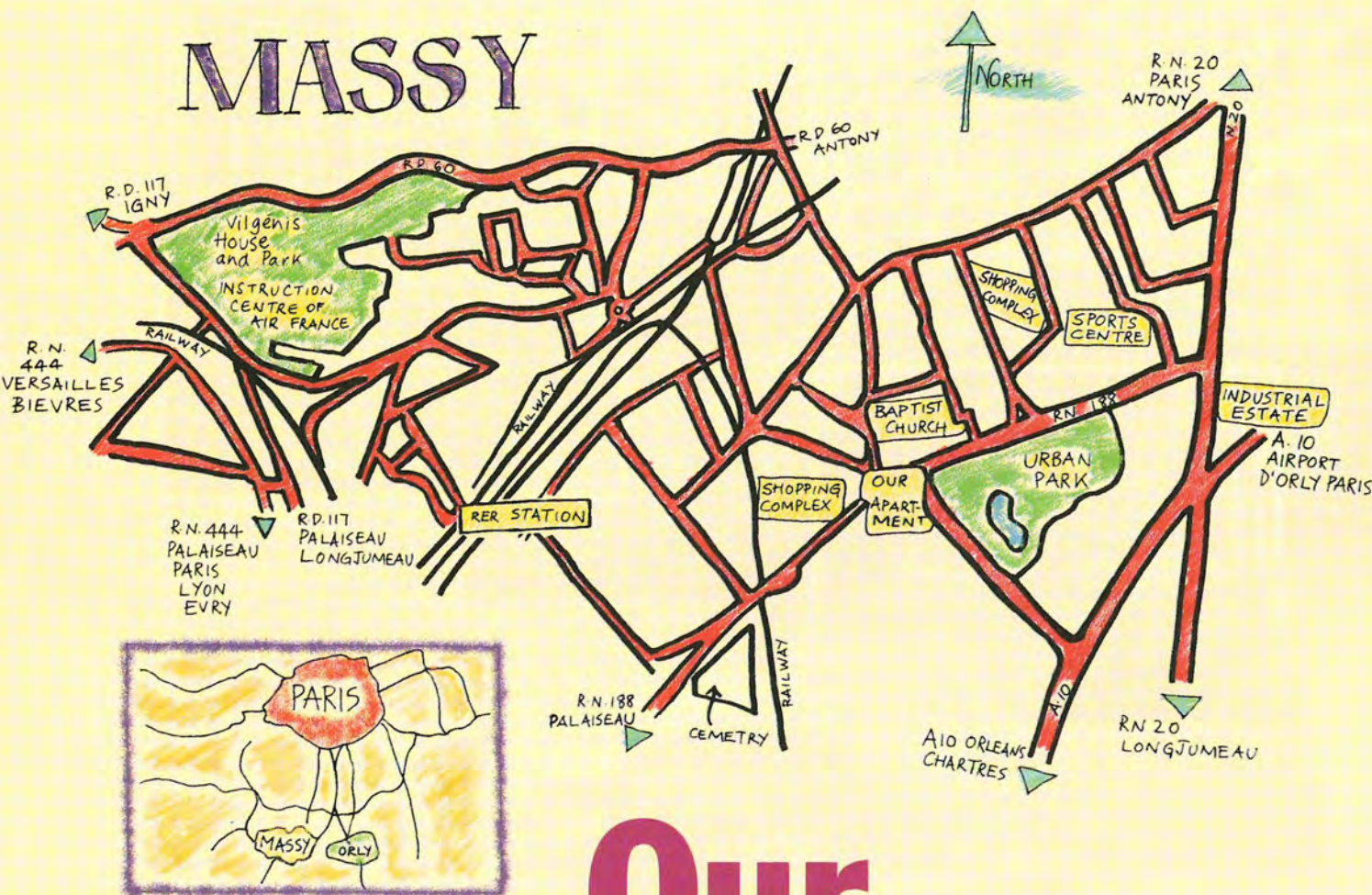
Within Massy there are two Catholic churches, a Baptist church, a Reformed church, a Lutheran church, an Independent Evangelical Reformed church and a synagogue. The only sect which has a foothold in the town is the "Rose-Croix", although the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and Moonies have a presence too. Massy also has a notable Muslim population.

The relationship between the Christian churches is much closer than in past years and indeed much closer than is usually the case in France. Over several years the Catholic, Reformed and Lutheran churches have organised a Bible study together; the Baptist and Independent Evangelical Reformed churches have cooperated on a regular basis and all six churches have taken part in occasional ecumenical events.

This year saw an acceleration in inter-church relationships with the organisation of a 15 day Bible exhibition. An extensive exhibition of Bibles, artifacts and posters was displayed in the Town Hall for two weeks. Alongside the main display, videos were shown, computer software was run and a large selection of books was provided. In addition, a series of seminars and concerts was organised to coincide with the period of the exhibition, including such speakers as the Bible translator Alfred Kuen. As one of the church leaders commented, it was "the biggest Christian event in our town since the Reformation!"

Continued on Page 22

MASSY



Our town

M a s s y

So it came about that, in 1995, Phil Halliday was invited to be the first full-time minister of Massy Baptist Church. Two years on, Phil and Rosemary are on the point of gaining the honour of also being the longest serving pastoral couple that the church has had!

During the last two years, the church has welcomed 23 new members and has been able to change its status from a Home Mission "plant" to an independent "constituted" church. The goal is that the church will continue to develop and become sufficiently strong to financially support its own minister.

The Baptist church in Massy reflects the diverse mix of ethnic backgrounds which characterises the town. Although most of the congregation are now "French", there are 16 different countries of origin represented on a Sunday morning. Together God's people in Massy are trying to live out their faith in such a way that neighbours and friends can see it "close-up", ask questions and be drawn to Jesus.

Massy Baptist Church

Massy Baptist Church was planted around 20 years ago on the initiative of the French "Home Mission". One of the French Baptist leaders had been invited to create a pastors' school for the ongoing training of the ministers of the French Baptist Federation and this school was situated in Massy. The church was born, therefore, in the chapel of this school's buildings.

In the 20 years which followed, Massy Baptist Church had a succession of ministers, but each was only able to help out on a part-time basis and for just

a year or two. For example, one minister taught in Massy and helped in the church part-time; another was finishing a research degree in Paris and worked for the church half-time.

By 1995 the church had grown to a good nucleus of around 30 members. At this stage it was felt that Massy needed a full-time minister to consolidate and build up the work. The French Home Mission provides grants to churches which could not otherwise support a minister financially but it also benefits from partnerships with Baptist Unions of four other countries who provide "missionary" pastors to work in France.

Profile

Jules Bayang

“My name is Jules and I am 26 years old. I come originally from Cameroon, but I have been living in Massy since I was 19. I worked in the local library as a security man, but then the council moved me to the sports centre, which I much prefer. Now I have the opportunity to teach sport as well as looking after the security side of things.

I grew up in a Catholic family. This meant going through the catechism and being baptised. I even served the Mass. Our family was Catholic by tradition, however, and I did not have what you would call a “faith”. I believed in God but I had not yet put my life into his hands.



Family difficulties, the death of my mother when I was very young and a generally tough life combined to make me hard, closed and unapproachable. That was why my family decided to send me to France. Once here, I cut myself off from the Church and for ten years, my life was quite wild and pretty awful. When I look back on those years now, I realise that God never left me. He had a plan for me and was protecting me from even worse mistakes.

God put someone on my path who helped me make a fresh start spiritually. This person invited me to their church. At first I was very reticent, but little by little, I became less resistant. The welcome which I received at church was also a decisive element for me. Before long I was taking part in Bible studies and understanding God’s Word better. I received Jesus as my Saviour and was baptised on Easter Sunday. Now I can say that “nothing can separate me from the love of God”.

First impressions



John & Sue Wilson

For John and Sue Wilson, like hundreds of other missionaries across the French-speaking world, the town of Massy is synonymous with the French language school run by the French Baptist Federation.

“Massy language school is in the middle of a dense population, but its magnificent garden sheltered by cedars, gives it not only its name (‘Les Cèdres’), but also a feeling of calm in the midst of a jangle of foreign words. The teachers at the school helped us to unravel these sounds in our discovery of one of the world’s most beautiful languages.

We spent four terms at ‘Les Cèdres’, allowing us to move from the present tense to the intricacies of the subjunctive! The daily classes and nightly homework prepared us not only to read and understand the spoken language, but also to express ourselves in conversation and to speak before an audience. With a nursery our newly-born child was well looked after and Sue was able to be with her whenever necessary. The daily time of worship and the common call to mission make the language school at Massy a very special place to learn how to lose your tongue and learn to speak again!” ●



Massy Baptist Church

T H E D E M O C R A T I C R

C O

HOW A CHURCH PLANTED ITSELF BY **OWEN CLARK**

Beyond Mbankana you climb slowly up a winding road out of the Lufimi valley for a couple of miles. If you then take the yellow dirt road to the left across rolling grassland for several more, you begin a long descent to the River Uu (oo-oo), the mud houses of Kinzono just beyond largely hidden among the mango, avocado, nsafu, oil palm and other trees.

On our first visit we sat and talked with the frail old chief and his sons. On learning our business they said they already had a church, but no school or dispensary. They would gladly set aside land for these, and would we also build a brick house with a tin

roof for the chief? Operating as we were in Peter and John mode, ie silver and gold had we none, we prayed with them and left, in any case not wanting to compete with the church already there.

Months later, when work was already well established at Nguene, Bwantaba and Mbankana, a note came from Papa Honoré, the chief's eldest son, inviting us to talk with a group of Kinzono people. They had decided, they said to start a fellowship, and they had chosen Papa Bernard to be their teacher. Situated on an alternative well-travelled road to Bandundu, the village was growing. The pastor of the existing church was present and encouraging.

Not entirely convinced, we put the onus on

them to erect a pole-and palm-frond meeting place. Evangelist Mputu gave a word of encouragement from Scripture; they served us a meal, and we left with the promise to return a month later.

By our next visit they had cleared a site designated by the chief near the main road, stretching gently down to the river, their water supply. Though poles had been cut from the forest, they were still meeting in the shade of a tree. Their evident enthusiasm had to be taken seriously. This time we left a Lingala Bible and a few hymn books.

From then on there was no shirking the challenge. Mputu held a three day evangelistic campaign in front of Papa Honoré's house, and Honoré himself knelt with those who made a public profession of faith in Christ. A baptismal class was started. Honoré formally returned his second wife to her family, and joined the class. One of the team, Belesi, with Nkie from Bwantaba, stayed several days to visit from house to house.

On subsequent trips we took turns preaching at Kinzono, and Mputu gave time to teaching the baptismal candidates. People from Mbankana came along to encourage. Monduene, a teenager, and her singing group showed that young people could contribute to worship. Albert and Matondo walked from Mbankana to share the preaching. Relationships blossomed. On every occasion Mamas Jackie and Bernadette prepared fufu and pondu with whatever was in season - mushrooms, caterpillars or occasionally, when Honoré had been



REPUBLIC OF CONGO

A Fair Beginning



In the event carols were taught and sung, and the birth of Christ, not to townsfolk, but to villagers, celebrated.

out with his gun, antelope.

When Advent came round we decided to spend Christmas at Mbankana, and baptise their candidates on Christmas morning. The week-end before would be spent in Kinzono, but their baptisms had best wait till January. In the event carols were taught and sung, and the birth of Christ, not to townsfolk, but to villagers, celebrated. Whereas the Mbankana women were able to prepare Christmas readings, it turned out that not one of the Kinzono women could read.

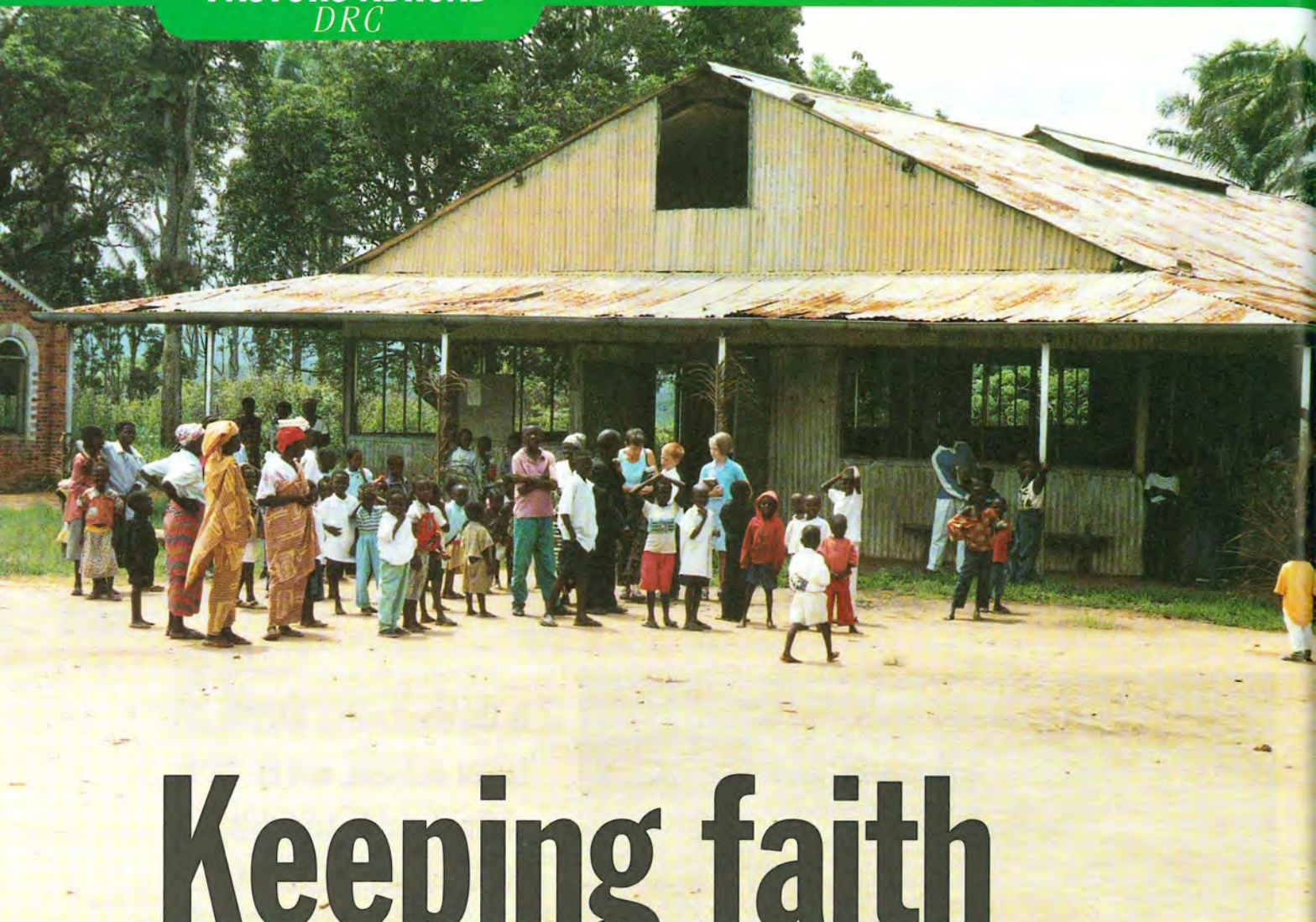
At the end of January, Clémentine, experienced in evangelisation through literacy, joined the team and started classes with the Kinzono women. Pastor Makiese from Kinkole came too. Interviewing the candidates he found six to be ready for baptism - Papa Honoré and two of his boys, Finzono and Nkwi, Lengelo and his wife Valentine, and a girl, Itedi.

At the end of the Sunday morning service the pastor from the other church and his members joined us to process,

singing, down the road to the river, across the wooden bridge and round to the men's bathing spot, free at that time of day. Pastor Makiese explained the significance of the ceremony and baptised the six on profession of their faith. Still dripping, and still singing, they led the way back up to the village, before going off to change. Back in the now-completed church the nine founder members welcomed the newly baptised into the fellowship, and for the first time they communed, and we with them, at the Lord's table.

No doubt that little fellowship still had a long way to go to build up its faith and witness but, given our early hesitation about the whole venture, we felt, with a sense of gratitude, that they had made a fair beginning. ●





Keeping faith

PHILLIP HATTON
RETURNED TO DRC AFTER
FOURTEEN YEARS

Reaching the door of the plane at Ndjili airport the tropical heat hit me again as if it were a wall. I was back in Zaire, as it was still called then, fourteen years after leaving. The sights, sounds and smells struck me, and with them the memories of my time as a teacher with the BMS at Ngombe Lutete, and the anticipation of what it would be like for the next six months, covering the Home Assignment of Stephen and Elizabeth Allford.

We arrived at a time when Zaire was suddenly in the news. Every bulletin seemed

to have a report of rebels, refugees and all kinds of trouble. But the demonstrations in Kinshasa soon calmed down, and we started to renew friendships, make new friends and experience the country again.

Having experienced contact with the country over the years we knew that we should expect serious deterioration of the infrastructure, severe inflation and many demands for assistance from people. We also knew that the country was facing political instability; just how much, we did not appreciate in November.

But it was the things that were working which struck us even more forcefully than the deterioration. Because the dollar was freely available and in use there was a functioning economy for some at least.

There was a telephone system which worked - we were able to phone, e-mail, and fax all over the world. Though many people were unpaid, those whose salaries were based on the dollar, sterling or the Belgian franc were more able to keep pace with inflation. With money, especially hard currency, one could buy whatever one liked, though many things were out of our range. The selection of French cheeses and pâtés, for example, was amazing. Petrol, which last time was often in short supply, and had to be queued for - perhaps for many hours - was freely available. At one point the local garage was giving away glasses to encourage sales!

In contrast for most people life was very hard. Medical services only worked because people came with medicines and equipment, and paid the



doctors and nurses directly. The church was one of the few things which continued to function. Much of the education available was in church schools; the medical work of dispensaries and clinics was for many people the only chance they had of health care. The life in the church at ordinary parish level and in the lives of individual believers was a tremendous encouragement to me.

The main CBFZ churches had more than one service on Sundays to accommodate the numbers who attended. Kitega's French service began at 6.45am in order that the main Lingala service could follow. By the time I stood up to preach, the building was almost full of mainly young people, men and women. This experience was repeated at the

other churches I was able to visit. At Lisala church they were in the middle of a building programme, including the provision of a new hall for the growing Sunday School - all provided by the giving of church members. At Itaga they had just collected sufficient funds, in dollars, to provide a new sound system. These were ordinary people, not rich benefactors, achieving this.

One huge difference I noticed was the open criticism of the President and his regime. Many times I heard the whole system condemned as evil and Mobutu blamed for what he had done to the country. Yet my strongest single memory is of one Christian, aware of what had been done to his country, who could still offer hope to Mobutu. How, he asked, could the President, so seriously ill from cancer, not repent and turn to God, who would forgive him!

I have called the country Zaire up to now, but of course this is no longer the case. The rebels were still in the east as Easter approached. From then on the rebels advanced and the future of the country dominated life. Each day there seemed to be news of some ex-patriates making the

decision to return home. The embassies were making plans for evacuation and I attended meetings at the British Embassy. One morning there was a news report on the western media that all foreigners had been ordered to be killed and another time we heard that the rebels wanted us to leave Kinshasa. Kinshasa seemed to be full of the international press, television and radio. We had visits from the BBC, ITN, Radio 5, plus phone calls from local radio and newspapers.

Most people expected and feared a bout of extreme violence in the city. That the rebels would take over seemed inevitable. In this situation the church continued.

Missionaries could pull out, but the mass of the people could not. So they prayed. It is my belief that the takeover when it came in early May was as peaceful as it was because the church kept its faith. I had preached on the stilling of the storm in this period; warning against the danger of thinking Jesus was asleep when times were hard. I believe that many Christians did not believe Jesus was asleep, and believed he would bring them through the storm. He has. To continue the illustration they now find themselves in uncharted waters in the DRC, with a new government and many problems, but they have their faith—which has been tried and tested. ●

Phillip Hatton is minister of Wotton Baptist Church, Gloucestershire.



The road from Kinshasa to Mbanza Ngungu

TAKE 2

Take Two – a resource for church leaders and workers

When you're ill . . .

In many parts of the world when someone is ill, the first thing they have to do is see if they have enough money to pay the hospital bill. Poor people often have to take out loans from money lenders.

In Brazil patients queue from the early hours of the morning, sometimes all night just to book an appointment. They can also wait for nine to twelve months for an eye test or a dental appointment.

In many hospitals worldwide the patient is given a prescription and has to go out of the hospital and search in pharmacies and elsewhere to find everything they need - even for operations. They have to buy needles, syringes, sutures, scalpel blades, anaesthetics, gloves, gauze, cotton wool, antiseptic, premedication, catheters - the lot - and all the medicines.

In CAR and elsewhere normal patient care, washing, feeding etc is done by family members. This means if you have no-one to look after you, you cannot stay in hospital. Sometimes the hospital staff have to pay someone to feed a patient who comes to hospital on his or her own so that the patient will agree to stay.

Some statistics from Nepal - one of the poorest countries in the world

- 100 children die daily from pneumonia, which is a readily treatable condition.
- Malnutrition, TB, and diarrhoea are common conditions which needlessly kill thousands each year.
- Tansen Hospital, Nepal is now one of the busiest hospitals in the country with 110,000 out patients seen annually, some travelling from all over western Nepal and northern India to receive care.

Did you know that...?

- Hospital and clinic entrances in Brazil are manned by armed guards to protect the staff - and especially the doctors - from angry, distressed relatives.
- Medicines from Eastern Europe and parts of Asia, particularly India and China, are flooding the market in DRC and CAR, and some are of dubious origin.



- The sign above Tansen Hospital, Nepal reads "We serve, Jesus heals."
- BMS doctor Adrian Hopkins reports that once when he was in Zaire a patient arrived at the clinic a day after he had left on a visit. She camped out at the mission for six months as she could not face the long walk back.

What being ill will cost you

Kimpese Hospital, DRC, has different categories of people for payment purposes eg A - Villager, B - Salaried person, C - Societies, D - Companies, E - the rich.

The cost of an operation would vary according to category.

An appendectomy would cost Cat. A the equivalent of £65 - £70, Cat. B £98 - £105, Cat. C £200, and Cat. D £325 - £350. This would include the bed and medication.

Costs at the Baptist Hospital, Fortaleza, Brazil

Private consultation £36.00 - £40.00
Dressing a wound and/
or removal of sutures £6.00

Injection £4.00 - £5.00
Inhalation for asthma + oxygen £5.50
Crepe bandage £2.90 - £5.20
Plaster of Paris - for fractures £2.80
Paracetamol (4 tablets) £1.00
Antibiotics: ampicillin (4 tablets) £19.40
Contraceptive pill £2.50
HRT patches (18) £13.00
Asthma inhaler £6.95
Diabonese for diabetics (100 tablets) £9.40
Tranquillisers £3.00 - £5.00

Apart from tranquillisers, all the other items can be bought without prescription. Millions of Brazilians, who do not have time to queue for a doctor buy their remedies over the counter.

The cost for cataract surgery in CAR is US \$20, inclusive of medicines and glasses. This is half the basic minimum wage for someone in work, which is however, rare. \$20 represents up to a quarter of the sum many get paid for their annual cash crop (cotton or coffee).

Out-patients in Tansen Hospital, Nepal pay the equivalent of £1.90 for an examination, investigations and treatment. In-patients pay only £3.50 on average for their basic hospital care.

Contributed by:
Andrew Furber, Nepal
Sue Headlam, Bangladesh
Adrian Hopkins, CAR
Gwen Hunter, DRC
Mary Parsons, Brazil

COUNTRY	MATERNAL MORTALITY (PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS) 1980 -91	AVERAGE No. CHILDREN PER WOMAN	DOCTOR/ PEOPLE RATIO	UNDER FIVE MORTALITY PER 1,000
Albania	n/a	2.8	n/a	31
Angola	n/a	7.2	1:17,750	292
Bangladesh	600	4.8	1:6,890	133
Belgium	3	1.6	1:310	10
Brazil	200	2.9	1:1,080	67
CAR	600	6.2	1:25,890	180
China	95	2.4	1:1,191	42
D.R. Congo	800	6.7	1:13,540	180
El Salvador	n/a	4.2	1:2,830	67
France	9	1.8	1:350	9
Guinea	800	7.0	1:46,420	234
India	460	4.0	1:2,460	126
Italy	4	1.3	1:210	10
Jamaica	120	2.5	1:2,040	19
Myanmar	460	4.3	1:12,900	117
Nepal	830	5.6	1:16,830	147
Portugal	10	1.5	1:490	12
Sri Lanka	80	2.5	1:5,520	21
Thailand	50	2.3	1:4,360	33
UK	8	1.9	1:700	9
Zimbabwe	n/a	5.5	1:7,110	88

(Third World Guide pub. Instituto del Tercer Mundo)

resources for leaders

Childbirth

- "When Andrea asked the local dentist if he wanted a boy or a girl, he replied that he would be happy to still have a wife." (Mark Hotchkin, Guinea, West Africa)
- In Nepal around 5,000 women die every year as the result of the complications of pregnancy - more than 60 times the maternal mortality rate of the UK.
- In one government hospital in the Central African Republic the death rate after caesarean section has been almost 100 per cent.
- Estimates for 1996 show that the number of women worldwide who die each year in pregnancy and childbirth is around 600,000 - that is 1,600 every day.
 - Over 200,000 die of haemorrhaging.
 - 100,000 die of sepsis, where the mother's bloodstream is poisoned by a rising infection from an unhealed uterus or from retained pieces of placenta, causing fever, hallucinations and extreme pain.
 - 75,000 die from attempting to abort their pregnancy themselves - around 50,000 women and girls attempt this every day, by taking drugs, submitting to violent massage, or inserting a sharp object such as a straightened coat hanger, knitting needle or sharpened stick through the vagina into the uterus.
 - 75,000 die with brain and kidney damage through eclampsia, a dangerous condition that arises in late pregnancy.
 - 40,000 die of obstructed labour.

POST IT!

Something new to help our memory! Little stickers varying in size, but usually yellow. It is the stickability that counts. Stick it on the fridge, the dressing table, the garage door, the bench or the office desk - and you remember. Sometimes it's a reminder to remember a birthday or anniversary, make a telephone call, send a present. By buying a set of twelve colour picture postcards - the Action cards - and sending one off each month, you will be bringing encouragement to people in different parts of the world. It's only a small effort, but it can bring a large response. You may even receive a reply!

In this way you will be taking action on issues like fair trade, poverty, the environment, refugees, child labour, debt and development.

For details phone Peter Briggs on 0121 550 5186, or speak to your Missionary Secretary. He/she will already have been sent details about them.

To order write to Methodist Publishing House, 20 Ivatt Way, Peterborough, PE3 7PG. Tel 01733 332202.

Action cards are produced under the auspices of BMS, BUGB, Christians Aware, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church.



ACTION CARD



PHOTO: SEAN SPRAGUE/PANOS PICTURES

Karen Refugees

These Karen (pronounced Ka - ren, with the emphasis on the 'ren') children pictured on this month's card are happy now they have found safety and peace in a refugee camp in Thailand. But a lot of other Karen children are suffering greatly because in their homeland of Myanmar (Burma) many have seen their homes destroyed and members of their families killed when the Burmese soldiers (SLORC) attacked their area.

They have been forced to run away in fear from Burma, to find refuge in Thailand. Earlier this year the list of atrocities against the Karen people on the Thai border was long and made uncomfortable reading. Often abducted from their homes, both men and women have been forced to act as porters, carrying weapons and supplies for the SLORC troops. They were fed five spoonfuls of rice morning and evening. If they could not keep up the expected pace, they would be beaten,

tortured and murdered. The female porters would often be raped, and if they resisted, they were often mutilated or killed. Villages have been burned down time and again.

The people live in constant fear. At time of writing (end of September) the situation is fairly calm because it is the monsoon season. But all in all 120,000 people are living in these refugee camps, and the number is growing.

Send this month's Action Card to General Than Shwe, Chairman, State Law and Order Restoration Council, Ministry of Defence, Signal Pagoda Road, Yangon, Union of Myanmar, beginning your message "Dear General". Appeal to the Myanmar authorities to take immediate steps to ensure the Burmese army does not engage in further deliberate and unlawful killings, torture and ill-treatment against civilians, including members of ethnic minorities.

TAKE 2

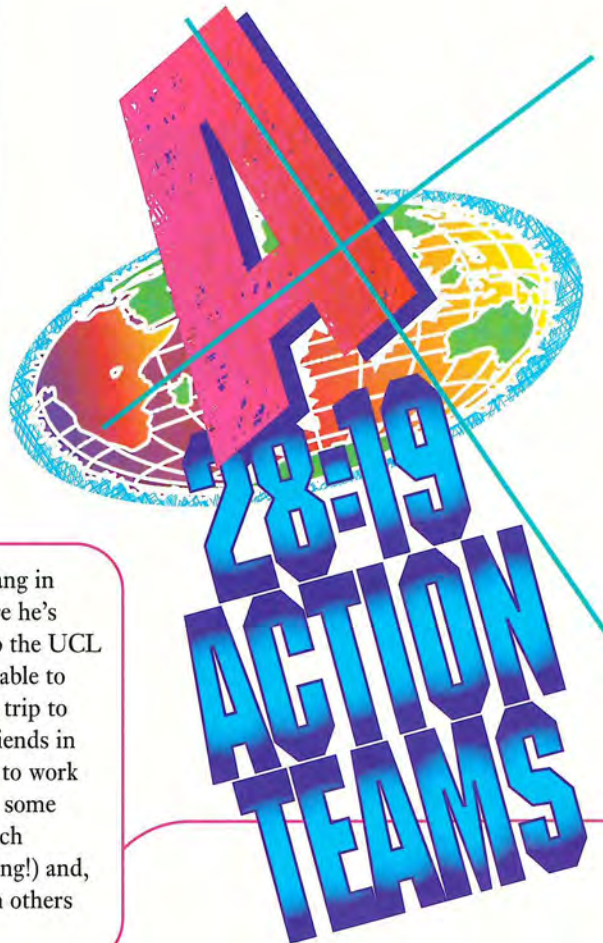
Action Teamers: where are they now?



JENNY BARRETT INVESTIGATES

Julian Sugg was part of the first Action Team.

"Six years ago," he said, "I returned from six months in Jamaica and started at medical school in London. I've reached the stage where I've lost the cocoon of studenthood and decisions have to be made. Now it's either a dispensary in Peru or plastic surgery in LA. 28:19 did give me an inkling of the joys and dilemmas of overseas work, and I'll certainly spend some time abroad (probably working in community health care). I'm excited about Britain though. There is a new hope for change (Swampy is one of my heroes) and I'd like to be a part of what Christians can offer and learn from the DIY culture of direct action for social change. People in tree houses need doctors too!"



Oliver Campbell Smith rang in from University College London, where he's studying Geography and heading up the UCL Jazz Society. This summer he was able to accompany his father on a business trip to the Ukraine and visit missionary friends in Ethiopia. Eventually, Oliver hopes to work with refugees, either for the UN or some other agency, using his French (much improved during his time in Morsang!) and, like the Action Team, working with others towards a common goal.



Hugh Clements-Jewery

found he came down from the high of 28:19 with a bump: "It was hard having to deal with the more mundane things at home. .. I was definitely a bit snowed under initially but I think that the tough times that I had when I was in Albania helped and taught me to rely on God completely in whatever I was doing".

Now captain of his Oxford college's football team, Hugh deeply appreciates the support he gets from the college Christian Union. He is studying physiology and recalls: "I remember someone praying for me when I was in Albania that in studying this, God would really open my eyes to how wonderfully he has created us. And that is definitely my experience over the last year. I have developed a passion for physiology and I wouldn't do anything else at the moment!"

And of the future? "Several events over the last year have added to what occurred in Albania and I feel strongly aware of a call to the Baptist ministry."

The 28:19 Action Team members featured are:

Julian Sugg went to Jamaica (90/91)

Oliver Campbell Smith went to Morsang, France (95/96)

Hugh Clements-Jewery went to Albania (95/96)

Peter Hunt and **Rachel Hicks** went to Zimbabwe (93/94)



Fitting back into your church can be a bit daunting after the high-octane experience of Action Team. But very often the way forward emerges from what you've done and learned as a team member.

When **Peter Hunt** addressed a congregation of 500 in the Zimbabwean city of Mkoba, Pastor Moyo (then the President of the Zimbabwe Baptist Convention) urged him to consider training for the ministry. In response, Peter enrolled with the Baptist

Union Christian Training Programme (CTP) and accepted the post of Church Secretary - a role he had earlier considered and dismissed.

"Although I felt I had the practical skills to do the job some four years ago, I believe that God wanted me to wait a while to gain more experience. Going to Zimbabwe gave me that experience, and I thank God time and time again that he gave me the opportunity to go and serve him there. I still maintain that I learned more in Zimbabwe than I gave."

His Action Team colleague **Rachel Hicks** would agree:

"For me personally, God used these six months working with dynamic and vibrant African churches to open my eyes to the immense spiritual needs here in Europe! I remember walking through the bush one day outside a small village called Goromonzi: God gave me an almost overwhelming sense of the contrast between the light and life I had seen in Africa and the darkness in countries like France and Belgium. That was the first moment I remember seriously considering whether God might be asking me to serve him in one of these places..." After all" I wondered, "surely Africa is the place for missionaries!"

Throughout the last three years I've been learning more about the visions and struggles of God's people in France, and exploring the possibility of putting those ideas which came into my head in the Zimbabwean bush into action. In September I came to Paris to work with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES), who are involved in evangelism and discipleship among the 60,000-strong student population of France's capital. I feel so grateful and excited when I look back over the last four years and can see God's hand leading, directing and opening doors. I'm so glad that the God who is God in Zimbabwe and who showed us his power there is God in France too!"



Prayer focus



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

AFRICA



Simon and Karen Collins
ANGOLA

"The plea from everyone is for peace - then they can get on with rebuilding their lives and their country. There is a real danger at the moment of war breaking out again."

Derek Rumbol

Please pray for

- Simon and Karen Collins, BMS missionaries who've experienced a long and exasperating delay waiting for visas to begin their ministry in Angola.



Rena & John Mellor
DRC

"The country is mainly peaceful at the moment, but Kabila has a tremendous task on his hands to rebuild the civil service, the economy, roads and transport systems."

Derek Rumbol

John & Rena Mellor report that, although government troops patrol at night, armed gangs still go looting. Best thing is to keep a whistle by your bed to alert neighbours in case of trouble - they blow *their* whistles and soon the cacophony will bring the soldiers running!

However, the same soldiers have developed a habit of commandeering vehicles and homes belonging not just to those linked to the Mobutu regime, but to missionaries as well. The value of money has decreased by a third making food and other provisions a luxury for many.

Please pray for

- the Church of Christ of DRC - the umbrella organisation linking Protestant churches in DRC with a key role in their dealings with the Government
- the International Protestant Church, Kinshasa, its Baptist minister, Revd Bryan Pinches and his wife Eve. IPC is the main English-speaking congregation in the capital, attracting influential business and diplomatic personnel from the expatriate community.
- Pastor Nduku and the three other hospital chaplains supported by IPC - that resources will continue to be found to pay for medicines

patients couldn't otherwise afford and for rice, sugar, milk and soap to make their lives more comfortable.

AMERICAS



Margaret Swires
BRAZIL

Orival is one pastor with energy and enthusiasm to spare. BMS Margaret Swires can only hope this recent arrival in Satellite City doesn't burn out! And there's plenty for him to do. At their last joint service, just two congregations produced 29 candidates for baptism: Pitimbu is without a minister but has US evangelist Eddie at the helm, while the community at Ponta Negra (led by Pastor Lupercio) struggles to refurbish their shell of a church so they won't always have to meet on the street.

Please pray for

- Orival, his wife and four children, and the three deacons supporting them: Paulo, Romano and Miriam.
- Margaret as she seeks to revitalise the mission

programme for Satellite City

- Mike & Daveen Wilson in Trapia with their new believer's classes (one for adults, another for teenagers)
- Social work initiatives following the March symposium and questionnaire - meeting strategic needs

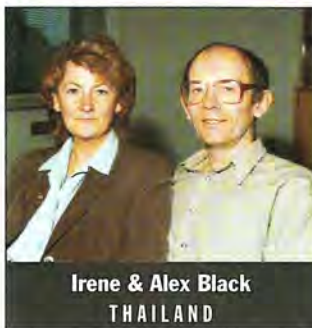


Derek & Joanna Punchard
BRAZIL

After training for the ministry at Spurgeons College, Derek served as pastor at Drummond Road Baptist Church in Bermondsey. For almost 30 years now, he and Joanna have lived and worked in the Brazilian state of Paraná, first in Paranavai/Foz do Igacu and now in Curitiba. Formerly State Director of Evangelism and Coordinator of the Curitiba Baptist Association, Derek is now BMS Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean. Their three adult children, Ruth, John and Susan, are all married to Brazilian nationals and, with their young families, are active members of the local church in Curitiba.

Around the world

ASIA

Irene & Alex Black
THAILAND

In 1957, local church groups established a school and hostel in Chiang Rai, a town in northern Thailand.

In 1997, Alex & Irene Black have moved into the Mission House across the road from the school. As well as teaching English to 10-15 year olds, the Blacks are starting an evening class for 32 of the staff.

The "Sahasartsuksa" or "united village" school and hostel is a unique Christian venture bringing together children from nine hill tribes.

Apart from Christianity in the place of Buddhism, the school sticks to the Thai national curriculum. The Government pays for their basic education, but for their hostel fees most children depend on sponsorship through Compassion International.

Many staff and pupils attend the nearby Karen Baptist Church which has made Alex & Irene so welcome - they arrived just in

time for the inauguration of a new young pastor, a new diaconate and a new baptistry.

Please pray for

- Alex & Irene as they find their feet in a new community
- school finances - that government funding and sponsorship will meet the rising costs
- fresh vision for the Baptist church in Chiang Rai and its young minister
- fourteen girls baptised after a Luis Palau crusade in Chiang Mai - that they find the spiritual nurture they need.

Yu Ler Bay
THAILAND

November and early December is harvest time in Thailand. Jacqui Wells and Yu Ler Bay will again join Karen women as they work in teams to garner the rice so carefully planted out earlier in the year.

BMS missionary Jacqui Wells works among the Karen women of the region. The Christian New Life Centre in Chiang Mai is a shelter for

151 hilltribe girls at risk of being sold into prostitution or already rescued from brothels. Founded in 1987 by US Baptist missionaries, the Centre is now run by Revd Lauren Bethel. Major initiatives include a health project aimed at preventing the spread of AIDS among tribal people, and the House of Love, a hospice for young women dying of AIDS.

Please pray for

- Jacqui as she prepares to return to the UK next year for five months' home assignment
- The work of the New Life Centre, a place of safety and companionship for vulnerable women
- Yu Ler Bay who longs for a scholarship to study at Bible School - Jacqui will need a new co-worker if she succeeds!
- Plans for the latest Karen Bible study book - the fifth in a series, this will be the first prepared by Karen women themselves.

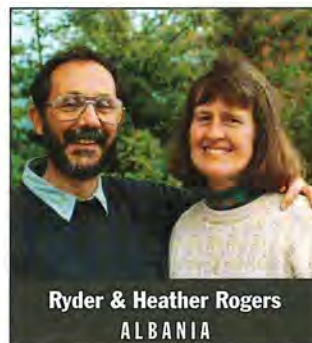
EUROPE

In Tirana, recent troubles have done much to sort the spiritual wheat from the chaff: though Glyn & Gill Jones may have noticed shifts in attendance at Kisha I Liri ("Freedom Fellowship") and other churches, the

underlying strength and vitality remains.

Glyn & Gill Jones
ALBANIA

But Christians are not immune to danger. Ryder & Heather Rogers report that the niece of a church member in Bregu-i-Lumit has become one of the many young Albanian women abducted and sold into prostitution in Italy. Another Christian girl, Marjeta, who used to attend the Rogers' school has also gone to seek her fortune there.

Ryder & Heather Rogers
ALBANIA**Please pray for**

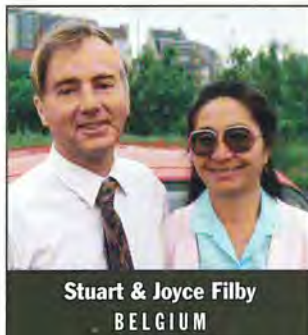
- the missing girls and their distraught families
- moves by the authorities in Italy and Greece to stop the trade in human lives; in the words of Heather Rogers,

Prayer focus



“pray that men will value justice more than money – that’s a God-sized prayer!”

● Albanian pastors, music leaders etc as they rise to the challenges ahead



Stuart & Joyce Filby
BELGIUM

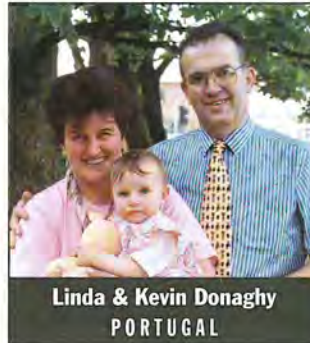
Conversions, baptisms and healings are attracting a lot of attention in a suburb of Ostende, Belgium. A summer of barbeques and social gatherings has culminated in an outdoor service to give thanks to God for the life of a new baby. But the subsequent increase in attendance at their Sunday and Wednesday meetings means Stuart & Joyce Filby are running out of space! Thirty each Sunday plus a dozen children and the occasional pet is too much for their living room. The beach is always an option in summer

– but what about those long Belgian winters? Rather than evict their BMS friends, the Filbys’ growing church has found a building for sale which would be big enough for several hundred worshippers – not to mention Sunday school and youth work!

Please pray for

- wisdom and finance to meet the need for a meeting place
- outreach beyond the church eg the new leaflet designed to appeal to local people with a Catholic background.
- resources for increased leadership and pastoral needs as the Christian community grows.
- many Christians in Ostende under pressure to work on Sunday and miss vital fellowship.
- health and safety for the Filbys in their well-used home.

Just twice the size of Wales (if you include Madeira and the Azores), Portugal is a predominantly Roman Catholic country with some 60 Baptist churches, most with less than 100 members.

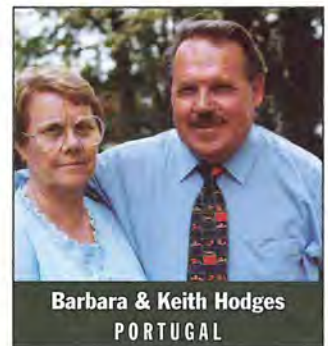


Linda & Kevin Donaghy
PORTUGAL

“Divided by a common language”: Kevin & Linda Donaghy are currently in Lisbon, unlearning the Portuguese dialect they picked up as BMS missionaries in Brazil so that Portuguese people can understand them! The potential for linguistic accidents is great: for example, in Brazil the word for bathroom is “banheiro”. Ask someone on the streets of Lisbon where the nearest “banheiro” is, and they’ll think you’re looking for a lifeguard!

In August, Keith & Barbara Hodges joined the BMS community in Portugal, teaching Old Testament studies ten miles west of Lisbon in Queluz. Although a fraction of the size of the Baptist Seminary in Curitiba (the Hodges’ former home in

Brazil), the one in Queluz coordinates teaching in other parts of Portugal. And there is much work to be done in the churches themselves.



Barbara & Keith Hodges
PORTUGAL

Please pray for

- the Donaghys and the Hodges as they adapt to a new culture.
- the laying of a good foundation for future BMS work in Portugal – “solid and trustworthy bridges of friendship and fellowship ... so that others may follow and take up the continuing work for Jesus”.
- The 28:19 Action Team there for six months to help and learn.

Checkout

Arrivals November

Tim and Rosimar Deller from Goiânia
Stan and Maureen Porter from São Paulo
Jill Igoe from Harare
Steve and Pam Seymour from Harare

Arrivals December

Phil Igoe from Harare
David and Cath McLellan from Kathmandu
Mark and Suzana Greenwood from Fortaleza

Departures

None

Overseas visits

Alistair Brown to Thailand and Kathmandu
Jim Clarke to Brazil

Charity Commission

Charity: Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo Medical Fund (formerly Angola Hospital Fund)

Scheme for the regulation of the Charity Reference: AS/27959/CD(T)

The Commissioners propose to make a Scheme for this charity. A copy of the draft Scheme can be seen at the Baptist Missionary Society, P O Box 49, Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 8XA, or can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4BL quoting the above reference.

Comments or representations can be made within one month from today.

Travel Tales

Questions, questions . . .



JOHN PASSMORE

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

As this is my last bit for *mb* I leave you with two questions, one here and the other at the end.

Q1. Which British politician said?

"I hope to see a Europe where men and women of every country will think as much of being European as of belonging to their native land and wherever they go in this wide domain will truly feel 'here I am at home'."

If you need more help, he (so it wasn't Maggie) went on to say, "We must build a kind of United States of Europe. In this way only will hundreds of millions of toilers be able to regain the simple joys and hopes which make life worth living."

Answered Prayer?

While visiting missionaries in my current role, as well as spending time chatting in their homes, I usually like to see them 'in action' if possible. On this occasion the couple I was staying with told me that their usual mid week meeting had been called and they were all planning to go to a nearby church where there was to be an evangelistic event. Off we

went to hear this singer/evangelist and although this was France, so not mud roads, rickety bridges or unreliable ferries to negotiate in overloaded Land Rovers, unfortunately we arrived at the church a little late.

There were no seats left where we could sit together so we went our separate ways and settled down for the next hour or so of song and persuasive testimony. There was a 'come to the front' type appeal at the end but no one responded. The meeting ended and those who knew each other mingled in the way Christians do at such meetings.

In some ways the atmosphere was, not altogether surprisingly, a little flat. Imagine, therefore, the reaction of the person I had gone with when someone came up them to tell them how wonderfully God had answered their prayers that night. Surprise would be an understatement. When there had been no visible response to the well presented Gospel message, just what was his prayer and how had it been answered?

He explained. When he looked around at the beginning of the meeting he realised that he knew all of the people present. They were all regular attenders of local churches and committed Christians and this was supposed to be an event to reach non believers. He prayed, 'Lord bring in someone tonight who needs to hear the Gospel.' No one came. He prayed again but this time more fervently, 'Lord you know who needs to be saved, there's a bar across the road, bring in one of those drunkards and challenge them with the message.'

Then the miracle happened. Someone he had never seen before came and sat next to him. He knew this person was challenged because he seemed to be fidgeting all the way through and so was sure this was the answer to his prayer.

When asked who this stranger was, he pointed, yes you've guessed, straight at me. I was the only person there he didn't know. I don't think he had any right to say that prayer. I make no comment about some of his other assumptions but my second question is this:

Q2 How many times do we ask God to do the very things he's entrusted to us!?

Editor's Note: Thanks to John for his making us think and making us laugh over the years! Gerry Myhill will be taking over in the New Year.

ILLUSTRATION SARAH PRENTICE

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