

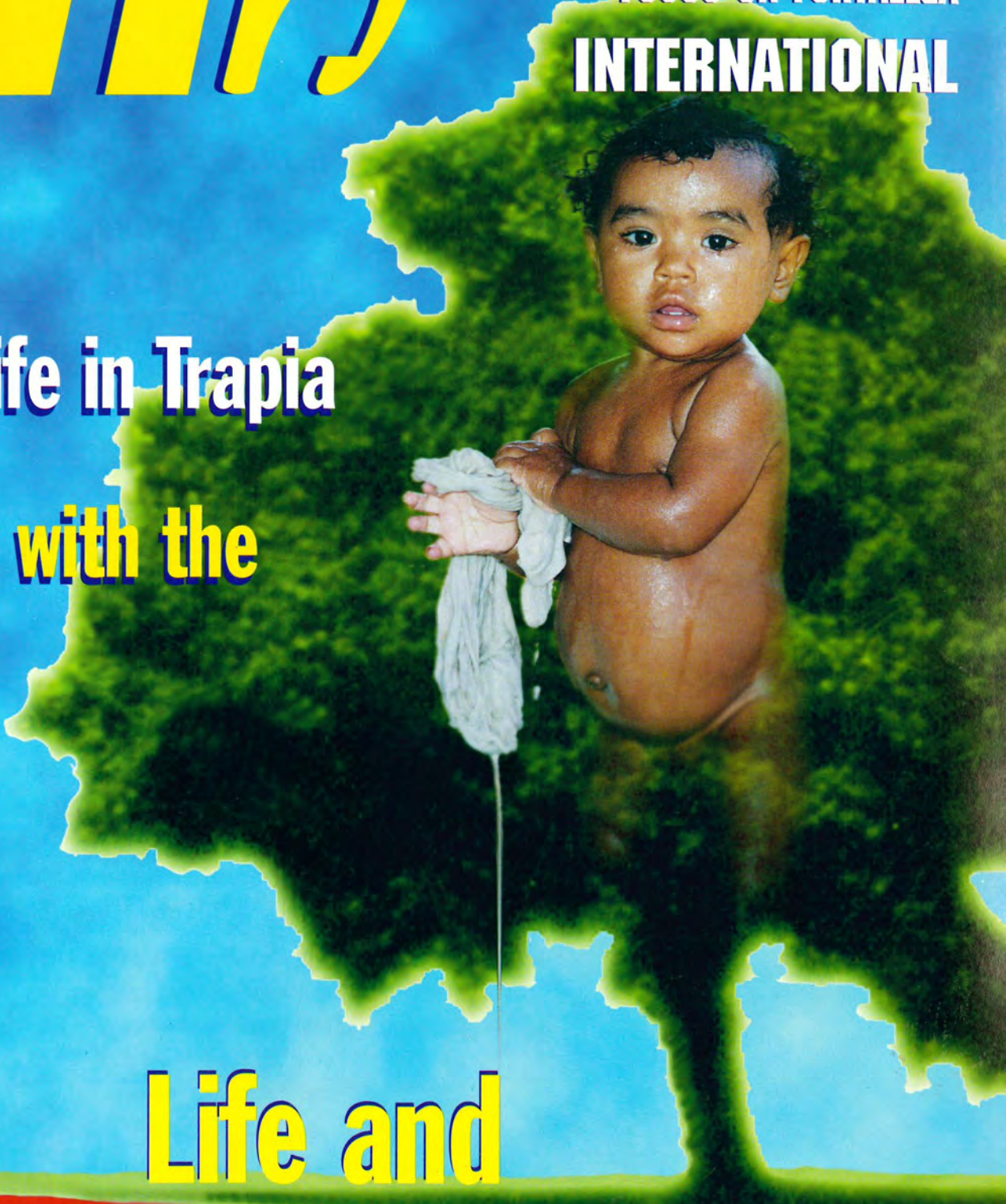
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NO.1 MISSION MAGAZINE
FIRST FOR FEATURES
FOCUS ON FORTALEZA
INTERNATIONAL

New life in Trapia

**Living with the
Mafia**

**Life and
death issues**



The next Millennium starts on 13th March 1999...




Wembley
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

NATIONAL BAPTIST LEADERS' DAY

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NATIONAL BAPTIST LEADERS' DAY

WEMBLEY CONFERENCE CENTRE

SATURDAY 13TH MARCH 1999

**SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE
BAPTIST UNION FOR THE NEXT
MILLENNIUM**

This is the chance for every Baptist church in the UK to be in at the start of something new. Share with us as we prepare for the millennium ahead.

Time: 1400 - 1900, Doors open 1300.

Speaker: David Coffey, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

Food is available at Wembley Conference Centre.

Tickets for this unique event are just £10.00 each, available from 'National Baptist Leaders Day', BUGB, at the Didcot address below. Please make cheques payable to 'The Baptist Union of Great Britain'.

Wembley is easy to get to, with plenty of parking space for cars and coaches, so why not get in touch with other churches in your area and share your travel arrangements.

13th March 1999. Put it in your diary now, and pass the message on!





THIS ISSUE
LIFE AND DEATH ISSUES

Baptist Theological
Seminary Library
Prague
Czech Republic

News



Jan Kendall

Death hasn't touched me very much even though I guess I'm what is called "middle-aged". As a child there was

Josephine, my tortoise, who disappeared from the garden one day and I was told by my mother - no doubt for highly altruistic reasons - that she had gone to hospital. She was there such a long while that even I, in my naivety, twigged what had happened. Whilst a teenager there was the accidental death by carbon monoxide poisoning of a girl in my school year and the death of one or two elderly relatives. Latterly one or two more relatives have died, and also our two dogs. But that's it.

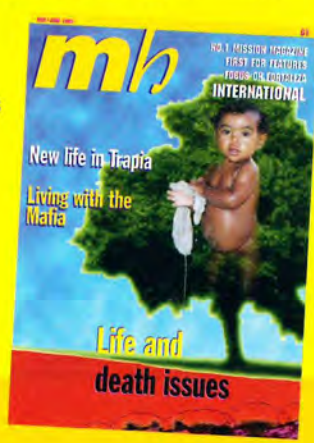
Now my experience might be unusual, I don't know. I do know, as indeed we all do, that tragedies do hit us both individually and as communities. Of course they do. And as a society that's geared up to counselling as a way of coping, it's surprising that death is still the great taboo, efficiently sanitised and boxed away. Maybe things are easing a little.

Princess Diana's death allowed people en masse to show that open grief was allowable. Perhaps it's a reflection on our society that what colours our attitudes to death also spills over into thoughts on life and living - or is it the other way round? We're trying to unpack a little of that thinking in this issue, contrasting attitudes to life and death around the world. It makes interesting reading, I can assure you!

As always, we have all your favourite features and items, plus we welcome Philip Webb as cartoonist in the Take 2 section.

Do keep writing in; we love receiving your letters with comments, suggestions and encouragements, knowing that we're working together to make world mission a priority in our daily lives and service.

Jan



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NEXT ISSUE JULY - AUGUST
THE LOCAL CHURCH IN MISSION



News

Australia

The need for reconciliation between aboriginal Australians and other Australians led the Queensland Baptist Convention to ask forgiveness for their failures and to commit themselves wholeheartedly to ensure that past atrocities against the Aborigines never happen again. (BWA News)

Malta

Baptists in Malta now hold open air Sunday night services with singing, testimonies and preaching in Maltese. There is also an Arabic meeting every Saturday at the church for Arab-speaking people, and this continues to grow. (BWA News)

Russia

Russia's Ministry of Justice has openly declared one section of the new law on church-state relations to be unconstitutional in informal guidelines recently distributed to provincial officials. The guidelines are generally less restrictive than the draft regulations which are now under discussion in Moscow. The Baptist World Alliance is still continuing to call for full religious freedom. (BWA News)

India

Missionaries and other volunteers are taking part in an initiative, which includes prayer and handing out specially produced leaflets to pilgrims as they travel to Haridwar in India's Uttar Pradesh state. Several million people make this pilgrimage seeking forgiveness of sin, and immortality, by bathing in the waters of the sacred River Ganges during the three-yearly Kumbh Mela event. (YWAM News)

Sierra Leone

People in Sierra Leone are continuing to suffer greatly from the sanctions and embargo placed on the country. Moses Khanu, General Secretary of the Baptist Convention says, "the lifestyle of every ordinary Sierra Leonean has been reduced to a beggar or a pauper." The European Baptist Mission compound in Lunsar - which includes houses, a conference centre and an eye hospital - has been ransacked. (BWA News)

Cuba Baptists can now send aid directly



Paul Montacute

Humanitarian supplies can now be sent directly to Baptist conventions in Cuba through Baptist World Aid (BWAid) it was announced recently. In the past aid had to be funnelled through the Ecumenical Council in Cuba, which is considered to be closely linked with the Cuban government.

This new possibility was announced after Paul Montacute, director for BWAid, had visited Cuba and had met with Silverio Platero in the government's Ministry of Religion. After much discussion Platero gave BWAid permission to send medicines and milk to the Baptist conventions and unions. Platero emphasised that no Bibles or religious books could be contained in the shipments as that would compromise the humanitarian goods.

Montacute promised that permission would be sought

immediately from the United States government to ship a container of much needed items to Cuba. "Powdered milk is desperately needed," Montacute said, "this is generic and not specifically for children. Other needs are



children's food, roofing materials, and agricultural equipment, especially hand tools."

Whilst the situation on religious freedom is somewhat

"Powdered milk is desperately needed..."

improved, Baptists still have great difficulty in rebuilding and repairing churches that have been damaged through years of neglect. Many of the churches are in old parts of towns or cities and are subject to conservation laws that act as a barrier to rebuilding. This is especially the problem with El Cerro Baptist Church in Havana. The government has said whatever they build has to be within the framework of the existing building. (EBPS)

Netherlands Gay Games outreach



An evangelistic outreach is being planned for Amsterdam when the city hosts the international Gay Games later this year.

Organisers believe as many as 500 people will take part in

News in Brief

the outreach, as an estimated 200,000-plus competitors and spectators gather in the city, widely known as the gay capital of Europe.

Amsterdam is the first city outside North America to stage the "homosexual

"We want to bring God's compassion into the streets of Amsterdam..."

Olympics", to be held 1 to 8 August. Arts and cultural presentations celebrating the gay lifestyle will run alongside the sporting events.

Those joining in the outreach, which is headed up by Youth With A Mission (YWAM), will share the



gospel with visitors through music, drama and literature distribution. "We're not setting out to attack gay people, or hit them over the head with the Bible," said YWAM's Rebecca Balderas. "We want to bring God's compassion into the streets of Amsterdam because he is still in the business of healing the broken-hearted. Many people have misconceptions about who God is. We want to reach them with the love of Christ. We believe that God has a purpose and destiny for each individual, and that a lot of people have accepted a counterfeit of what they can only find in a relationship with Jesus." (YWAM News)

United States Disarming evangelism

Churches around the world are lining up to copy a simple programme that is reaching people's hearts in a way other outreach efforts often fail to.

After years of involvement in all kinds of evangelism in New York, it has been found that the most effective way to reach people is simply to stop them and ask them if there is anything they would like prayer for.

Nick Savoca, who is developing a training programme to help set up these Prayer Stations, comments: "It's so disarming. They are not being asked for money or being confronted aggressively. Instead we are asking if we can do something for them - it seems to touch people in a deeper way somehow, and across all social classes."

Enquiries with requests for help in setting up similar outreaches have now been received from all over the United States as well as Canada, Australia and Europe. The initiative has also been filmed by American and Dutch TV crews. (YWAM News)



Alistair Brown



Using the media

A dozen or more satellite dishes search the sky for signals. The location could be anywhere, but in fact it is southern Albania. The dishes are fixed to the walls of one of the poorest apartment blocks in virtually Albania's most



ravaged town, Vlorë, scene of the worst riots a year ago.

Albania was starved of all outside contact until just a few years ago. Now people are hungry to know what the rest of the world is like. The poorer and more shut-off a country, the more people have satellite receiving equipment. It's a world-wide phenomena.

That's why BMS is a partner in SAT-7, transmitting Christian programming around the middle east. That's why we're pledged to increase our investment in spreading the gospel by the media. People hungry for knowledge should be fed the best there is. ●



Korea

Standing in the gap



A team of 74 students and staff from a Discipleship Training School in Kona, Hawaii, travelled to South Korea and shortly after arriving there began a 24-hour prayer vigil for North Korea. Their Training School leader, Mike Steinmeyer, sensed God wanted them to pray for this famine-ravaged country.

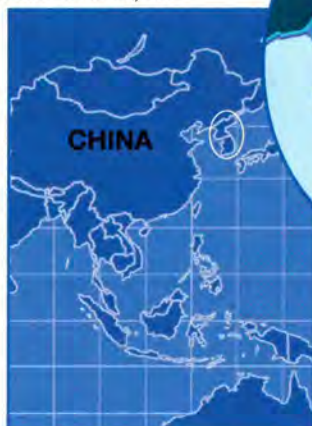
They were based just five miles from the Demilitarised Zone separating North and South Korea, and very soon the rumble of tanks and boom of artillery fire became commonplace.

Soldiers began to regularly visit these students and stayed for a game of football or for a cup of coffee or just a chat. One frequent visitor was a South Korean tank commander, whom staff and students led to faith in Christ.

The students have had to endure bitterly cold weather, food shortages and primitive living conditions. "It was hard for all of us, but

learning to live together in these conditions created a special unity among us," said team leader Jennifer Barler. "In Kona we don't have to worry about where our next meal is coming from, but in Korea we have to be 100 per cent dependent on God."

Having finished their training, the group divided into three teams. One team stayed on at the Demilitarised Zone to continue to intercede for the nation. "Korean Christians were surprised by how the Lord brought these young foreigners from many nations to stand in the gap for Korea," said leader Moses Kim. "They realised that reconciliation of both Koreas is an issue not only for Koreans but also for many Christians in other parts of the world." (YWAM News)



Nicaragua

Hidden cost of domestic violence

The study which was conducted by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) went on to say that 63



A recent study in Nicaragua has concluded that children from families in which women are subject to domestic violence are three times more likely to require medical care. In households where repeated serious physical violence against women has taken place, children are 100 times more likely to require hospitalisation.

per cent of children exposed to domestic violence have to repeat at least one school grade. On average they drop out of school at the age of nine, compared with age 12 for children of women who are not victims of severe abuse.

Economic dependence often traps women in abusive situations. The study found



that 41 per cent of non-wage-earning women are victims of serious physical violence, while only ten per cent of women who have salaried jobs outside the home suffer such abuse. (LAP)

Erratum

SOON's website address appeared last issue without a much-needed hyphen. The correct address should read:

<http://www.brigada.org/today/articles/web-evangelism.html>

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

World Mission Link

WOW Action Day

They ran around the world, did aerobics in a Brazilian forest, and were trapped under a purple parachute! And all because of ... a WOW Action Day. It was 31 January and 40 children and helpers at Heathfield Baptist Church in East Sussex gave it all they'd got learning about teamwork in world mission.



Songs, cardboard puppets, team games and a visit from Boomer the orang-utan all happened at some point between 10 am and 3 pm. Fiona Pimlott and Tracy Roslyn, from the BMS Youth and Children's Department, led the day. "A lot of children brought friends who don't go to church. It was a great opportunity to show them that world mission isn't boring." Special thanks to the church who provided a yummy cooked lunch for everyone!

Thank you John Maggs

BMS General Director Alistair Brown visited New Malden Baptist Church recently to pay tribute to John Maggs who had served on the church's missionary committee for over half a century.

John Maggs grew up as a member of the mission-supporting "League of Ropeholders" and stepped into his father's shoes as treasurer to the church's missionary committee in 1944; a role he continued in until the end of 1997.

John is characteristically modest about his impressive half-century of service. "When I started out there were people working with me who had been in their roles for 30 years, and they didn't think they were doing something exceptional," he recalls. "I think one of my qualities is stickability and this seems to be in short supply now. People want to or have to be on the move more these days!"

During John Maggs' treasurership the church has



seen giving to BMS, Operation Agri and Tools With A Mission increase from £145 in 1944/5 to over £15,000 in 1996/7.

Alistair Brown presented

John Maggs with an inscribed History of the BMS by Dr Brian Stanley, and praised his commitment which, he said, represented more than a quarter of the life of BMS.

Dates for your Diary

Events & Meetings

Cardiff

Wed 6 May

Wales WMA Annual Meetings at Tabernacl Baptist Church, Cardiff.

More information: Meriel Marsh 01443 831508

Brynmawr

Wed 20 May

Gwent WMA Rally at Calvary Bapt Ch.

More information: Sylvia Hamer 01495 225932

Glasgow

Mon 1 June

West of Scotland Women's Assoc BMS Summer Rally at Hillhead Bapt Ch.

More information: Preda Kennedy 0141 632 0883

Dalkeith

Wed 3 June

BMS event at Dalkeith Baptist Church

More information: Derek Clark 0141 775 1201

Llandrindod Wells

Thurs 4 June

Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire Assoc Annual Mtgs at Tabernacle Baptist Church

More information: Stephen Wood 01547 528443

Broadhaven

Sat 6 June

BU of Wales Engl Assbly. BMS service "Building the Church worldwide"

More information: Ifor Williams 01437 781235

Whetstone, Leics.

Sat 6 June

EMBA Assoc Day, Whetstone Bapt Ch.

More information: Mark Clay: 0116 286 3145

Rochdale

6 and 7 June

Rochdale churches BMS event

More information: Val Treaton 01706 522084

Solva, Pembro

Wed 10 June

Pembrokeshire WMA Rally

More information: Anna Williams 01239 820433

Lampeter

Wed 10 June

Carmarthen and Cardigan Assoc Annual Mtgs, BMS Service at Noddfa Baptist Church, of Lampeter

More information: Nesta Harries 01570 422143

Norton, Worcs

Sat 20 June

Worcester Association Day

More information: Betty Wheeler 01905 351893

Gateshead

20 and 21 June

Northern Family Association Day, Joseph Swan School, Gateshead

More information: Margaret Barnett 01207 504023

St Dogmaels

22 to 25 June

BU of Wales Welsh Assembly

More information: Gareth Hutchinson 01792 360909

Isle of Wight

28 June to 4 July

IOW Keswick with BMS Display.

More information: Phil Hindle 01823 698977

Birkenhead

Tues 30 June

Merseyside BWF and BMS Gift Day Rally, Laird Street, Birkenhead.

More information: Ann Ashworth 0151 427 6027

March General Committee

Two new candidates were accepted:

● Sylvie Bonser, a nursery nurse, will work with pre-school children in North Africa. Sylvie is a member of Leigh Road Baptist Church and has been a pre-school leader in her church playgroup, a governor of a local primary school and a small group leader of Alpha courses.

● Judy Cook, a Junior Sister at Birmingham Children's Hospital, will do nursing work, at a location yet to be agreed. Judy is a member of Barnt Green Baptist Church, Birmingham, and has been involved in Sunday School and leading her church youth club.

● General Committee voted to withdraw gradually the presence of long-term missionaries in Brazil over the next 12 years, handing over the work to Brazilian Partner Bodies, and increasing opportunities for volunteers and Action Teams. (Full story in Jul/Aug issue).

● BMS will apply to become a member of IAM (International Assistance Mission) with the hope and intention of working as an IAM partner in Afghanistan.

● Steps were taken to restructure, to face the challenges of the future. General Committee voted for the Board of Management to become charity trustees, whilst the Committee itself will adopt an advisory and consultative role, guiding the Board on policy matters. It also voted by a narrow majority to downsize, to allow for fuller involvement by its members. Number of meetings per year will stay at three.

Simon and Karen Collins

Simon and Karen Collins visited Angola for one month in March/April 1998 on a tourist visa. Whilst there they investigated the longer term visa situation and housing availability.

Stamp bureau

Stamp bureau: the total amount raised in 1997 from the sale of stamps, coins and cards was £6,771.

News



Sylvie Bonser (top);
Judy Cook (below)

Weaver of the Year Award



families.
At the recent award ceremony acknowledging the year's best weaver and best spinner Miss Miriam McIntosh, the Deputy British High Commissioner in Bangladesh was the Chief Guest. A wrist watch was presented to the best weaver, Mrs Khaleda Begum, who has been with the project for seven years. Mrs Marma received a

Starting in 1986 the Weaving Project was set up in Chandraghona, Bangladesh as part of a community health programme.

It is an income generating project for women at risk in the community who have no



other source of income. Many are widows or have been abandoned by their husbands. Some were prostitutes, and all were trapped in poverty. By taking part in this project they learn a traditional skill and become useful members of society who are able to support themselves and their

thermos flask as best spinner.



News in Brief

Bangladesh

Church grows slowly



News has come from the Bangladesh Baptist Sangha that 16 men and 19 women have been baptised in the Dinajpur area of Bangladesh in 1997. Seven new churches have also been established.

The Director of the Social Health and Education Development (SHED) Board,

James A Singh, writes "We sowed the seeds of the gospel of Christ in some places... Now it has been germinated and we have received the fruitful result. Do pray for new believers and for us."

BMS works in partnership with SHED as the social arm of the Baptist Sangha.

Relief Fund Update

Recent grants from the Relief Fund have been as follows: £5,000 for food and medical aid in Batumi, Georgia £5,000 for general food help


in such places as Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Chechnya £2,000 for purchase of basic grains for families at Santa Helena, El Salvador where agricultural workers have lost between 50 and 75 per cent of their crops due to climatic conditions caused by the El

Baptist House News

Welcome to


Paul Nicholson

Paul is now installed at BMS as the Systems Administrator. He has had ten years experience in computer systems development and management, and recently worked in Nepal as a BMS volunteer, setting up a computerised personnel system for the International Nepal Fellowship. Paul is a member of the New Baptist Church, Derby Street, Burton-on-Trent, coincidentally the same church as BMS President (1997/8) Martin Pearse belongs to.



Life in Retirement

Derek Mucklow



Derek Mucklow, former BMS Co-ordinator for London and the South East is now "retired" and living in Eastbourne. He says: "We are thoroughly enjoying our change of lifestyle and activity. Certainly the pace is somewhat slower, but there always seems so much we would like to do and never enough time to do it all. We are making lots of new friends, joining in several new ventures and, at the moment, 'filling pews' rather than pulpits! Even the car is pleased to exchange the North and South Circular roads and the M25 for Beachy Head and the South Downs. Christians never retire, and we are looking to the Lord to lead us into new paths of usefulness." ♦

Niño phenomenon. They have no means of repaying the funding given to them for seeds and fertilizers. Before they received financial help

they did not have enough food for their families and had no seed to replant this year.

BMS Co-ordinators. Make sure you're updated!

Co-ordinator Manager - Phil Hindle

North Cath Mawson
49 Allerton Road, Bradford, BD8 0AY
Tel 01274 487341

Midlands Theo Lambourne
13 Briar Walk, Oadby, LE2 5UE
Tel 0116 271 3633

London & South East Simon Jones
10 Somerton Road, Peckham, London SE15 3UG
Tel 0171 639 8717

Central & Eastern Jim Clarke
Dingley Dell, Church Road, Wentworth, Ely CB6 3QE
Tel 01353 778984

South & South West Phil Hindle
The Old Vicarage, East Lyng, Taunton TA3 5AU
Tel 01823 698977

Scotland Derek Clark
41 Newton Road, Lenzie, Glasgow, G66 5LS
Tel 0141 775 1201

South Wales Gareth Hutchinson
20 Southward Lane, Langland, Swansea SA3 4QU
Tel 01792 360909

North Wales temporarily being covered by Cath Mawson and Gareth Hutchinson (Note new arrangement)

Don't forget your BMS Co-ordinator is there to:

- help you plan your church's world mission programme
- help you resource your church for mission awareness
- enable you to see how BMS is helping to make Jesus known all over the world and much, much more!



NEW LIFE AT TRAPIA



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DAVEEN WILSON IS SHOUTING WITH JOY

It was early in the morning when they came running to tell me that Nilcéia was having her baby. I walked down the road to her house – the other six children were milling about, half-excited, half-frightened, still tousled from sleep. When I got in the bedroom, just bigger than the ramshackle double bed where she was sitting, Nilcéia looked worried. “I want to go to hospital – I’ve been in labour too long and the baby isn’t coming.”

She should know I thought, but then I heard that grunting sound at the end of a contraction and realised we’d never have time to get to hospital, about an hour away.



Mike and Daveen Wilson with their children Debbie, Paul and Julia

I settled in to help and encourage her the best I could and in less than an hour, little Lucas Alexandre was born, a bit blue, but beautiful. I was trembling as much as Nilcéia, which made us all laugh but it isn't every day I help a baby be born, especially to one of my best friends. New life is exciting, in whatever form. It also feels at least a little frightening to be responsible for it – babies are so vulnerable and new and I always feel like I don't want them to be spoilt in any way.

When we arrived in Trapiá, most of these



vulnerable new lives didn't make it to their first birth-day.

The women had lost confidence in their ability to breastfeed and were trying to raise their babies on bottles with watery powdered milk. At least three tins are needed per week but that would have taken the whole of what even the better off families earned in a week, so they got one tin, if it was a good week. No fridges, a hot climate, dirty water, flies covering the teats – I was surprised that any babies actually did make it though the few who did were far too small and many were mentally retarded.

In the month that we lost our baby (in a miscarriage), little home-made coffins were passing our house every day on the way to the cemetery. We felt overwhelmed by death. The waste of it all made me angry and this anger motivated me into an all-out campaign for breastfeeding. One mother, who had lost 14 babies, moved in with us along with the drunkard father and skinny only surviving son. For 40 days I got up every time that baby cried (and it was often!) and cajoled the mum into trying. By the end she was convinced and others were impressed enough to start giving it a go.

It seemed like God was helping to prove a point. Every mother who tried breastfeeding produced a ridiculously fat, healthy baby. My malnourished little neighbour, Irene, had a baby boy at the same time that our son Paul was born but her baby was always bigger and heavier than mine. It got to the point where you wondered how she had the strength to lug him about, and people started calling him "Irene's calf".

There were discouragements, especially when a mum that I felt sure was convinced would start giving a bottle and the baby would die before I knew she'd given up. Then, one day about two years ago, when we started counting up which mothers were breastfeeding, we suddenly realised that the fashion has surely changed and that the death of a baby is now a rare event in Trapiá – hallelujah!

New life is exciting in the

**Every mother who
tried breastfeeding
produced a ridiculously fat,
healthy baby.**

spiritual realm as well and we waited almost eight years to see our first re-birth here, so that made it even more special. His name was Tontonho and in the year since then, we've seen more than a hundred new births. It's exciting but it's also a little frightening to feel responsible for so many valuable new lives, especially when we know we have an enemy out there, only too willing to mess up their new lives. Pray for these new members of your family and for us as we help to make them strong. ●

Daveen Wilson works with her husband Michael in agricultural and development work in Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil.





DEATH AND A TRAIN



PHIL IGOE REFLECTS ON THE VALUE OF LIFE IN ZIMBABWE

Leaving one of the townships, my heart sank to see a low-loader stuck on the raised railway crossing. It was clear that the tractor, roped into service, was not going to be able to pull it off.

I turned my vehicle around to find an alternative crossing when I spotted the train rounding the corner. The frantic waving by the men on the stranded lorry was met with a blast from the train's horn. The lorry was quickly evacuated when it became clear that the train wasn't going to stop in time, and the resulting smash was spectacular. The lorry was completely wrecked, as were the overhead power lines bringing the main Harare to Bulawayo rail line to a standstill.

Once it was clear that all those in and around the lorry were clear we drove up alongside the train to check the driver had survived the impact. There was no



"The train was not going to stop in time..."

need to worry. The train was almost unscathed, and the driver, seemed to have enjoyed the experience.

Whilst waiting for the police to arrive I was speaking to the driver of the train, and asked him why he didn't stop. He told me that he had applied the usual brakes, but not the emergency ones. To

have done so, he said, would have caused a de-railment, and would have done significant damage to the rolling stock and the railway lines. I asked whether he knew that everyone from the lorry was clear. The driver responded that he thought they all had, but even if they hadn't, it wouldn't have made any difference.

As I made my way home later that afternoon I reflected upon the value of life. In a country where death is much more a way of life than in the West, the value of life can seem, at times, to be less highly valued. Where infant mortality is higher, and life expectancy is lower than "at home", and from the effects of an increasingly AIDS-ravaged society, it is easy to draw conclusions that people are less highly valued. However respect is placed on older members of society within the extended family network, and when I think of the, often institutionalised, abuse we place upon the weak and vulnerable in our society, who are we to judge? ●

Phil Igoe works for the BMS in Zimbabwe.

DEREK RUMBOL RELATES HOW THERE WAS NO MYSTERY ABOUT THIS DEATH!

I don't know if you can imagine what would happen if someone died on an Intercity train in this country, but my guess is it would probably be hushed up, and the body would be taken off the train very quietly and efficiently. Most people would not be aware anything out of the ordinary had happened.

A couple of years ago I was travelling on the Matadi Kinshasa Express with Brenda, my wife, on the way back from Matadi. In fact the Express train was one of the good things in what was then Zaire in that it actually did work. We heard an announcement over the intercom: a request for a doctor. A little later there was another announcement: somebody had died.

Then we saw people coming through, obviously evacuating a carriage, leaving the corpse alone there with a relative or friend.

The next thing we knew was that a sermon was being broadcast over the intercom; they'd obviously located a pastor on board! And there was music too - including Christian songs. Finally, in the true spirit of African solidarity they announced that an offering would be

made for the deceased family. One of the train's hostesses, more normally used to selling drinks, came through with a plastic bag collecting money and we heard, again on the intercom, that the sum of over 14,500,000 zaires had been collected, which then was roughly £100. That was an extremely generous offering in that situation.

We heard the intercom for the last time thanking the people again for the expression of African solidarity at the time of death. I remember thinking at the time: what an interesting contrast with what we would imagine would happen in this country! Which do you think is more appropriate? ●

Derek Rumbol is the former BMS Regional Representative for Africa. He has now retired and lives in Nottinghamshire.

*"a little later there was
another announcement:
someone had
died..."*





CHRIS MATTOCK TELLS OF LIFE IN SICILY

In the beautiful historic centre there are bombed out shells of medieval palaces but not from some recent terrorist campaign for Sicilian independence. Palermo is still affected by the Allied Forces defeat of the Italian army in World War Two. From the roof terrace of the Palazzo Chiaramonte in the centre of Palermo I looked into the ruin of other 13th century Gothic palace nearby, and saw abandoned 60s style cars rusting amongst hand-crafted Gothic masonry fallen from the bomb damaged roof. When Franco Zefferelli wanted to film a scene of 1940s Italian urban decay a few years ago, he went to Palermo because there was no need to build a set.

The city is ringed and dominated by huge complexes of six storey apartment buildings constructed without regulation or planning permission. They are inhuman, costly and ugly. The guidebooks call it the sack of Palermo. Once described as a jewel of the Mediterranean, the city has been overwhelmed by the Mafia who control the construction industry and stole the money sent from Rome for post war reconstruction. I mention Palermo because it is so well known, but to a

lesser extent the same effects can be seen all over Sicily. Lentini and Catania are no exceptions. Of course the traditional types of organised criminal activities, theft, prostitution, drug dealing, the protection racket and usury have not stopped. The other day at Lentini cemetery a lady showed me her husband and son's tomb. The inscription showed the son died age 30, six years ago and I asked if he had died of an illness. "No" the mother replied, "they murdered him". Her sister explained that he had seen 'them' do something so 'they' tied his hands and feet and threw him in a tank of water. He left a wife and three young daughters. More victims of an unseen organisation.

The biggest money, however, is in the construction industry, making use of the original Mafia skill, rent collecting. Forget ideas of well dressed young men carrying guns jumping out of big black cars. Look again at the postcard pictures of quaint Mediterranean streets and see the littered and weedy gutters, damp walls, peeling plaster and straggling electric wires. But don't just look at the old streets and buildings; every time you see an inhabited but unfinished building you see an effect of organised crime. Planning regulations are so complex and difficult

to apply that it seems in everyone's interest to ignore them and get on with building. Doesn't every one need roads, houses, jobs and a share in the money to be taken or earned? But the law doesn't protect those who live in buildings constructed without planning permission; accepting taxes from apartments built without permission would be to accept their existence and admit a crime has been committed. It is in everyone's interest to admit to nothing. But then the council has no money to

collect the rubbish when local taxes are not paid; roads built without approval are never swept or maintained and often remain unsurfaced, muddy and dusty. Haphazard electrical wiring causes power failures. The water supply becomes unsafe; a third of the city of Lentini has water declared undrinkable by the local authority. Poorly built apartments collapse when

there's an earthquake and reconstruction takes years. Lentini still has 300 families living in container houses, seven years after the last big earthquake.

How do churches live with the Mafia? Mostly they do what everybody else does, live with the effects of organised crime, stay out of any direct anti-Mafia involvement preferring to support

**"No" the
mother
replied, "they
murdered
him"**

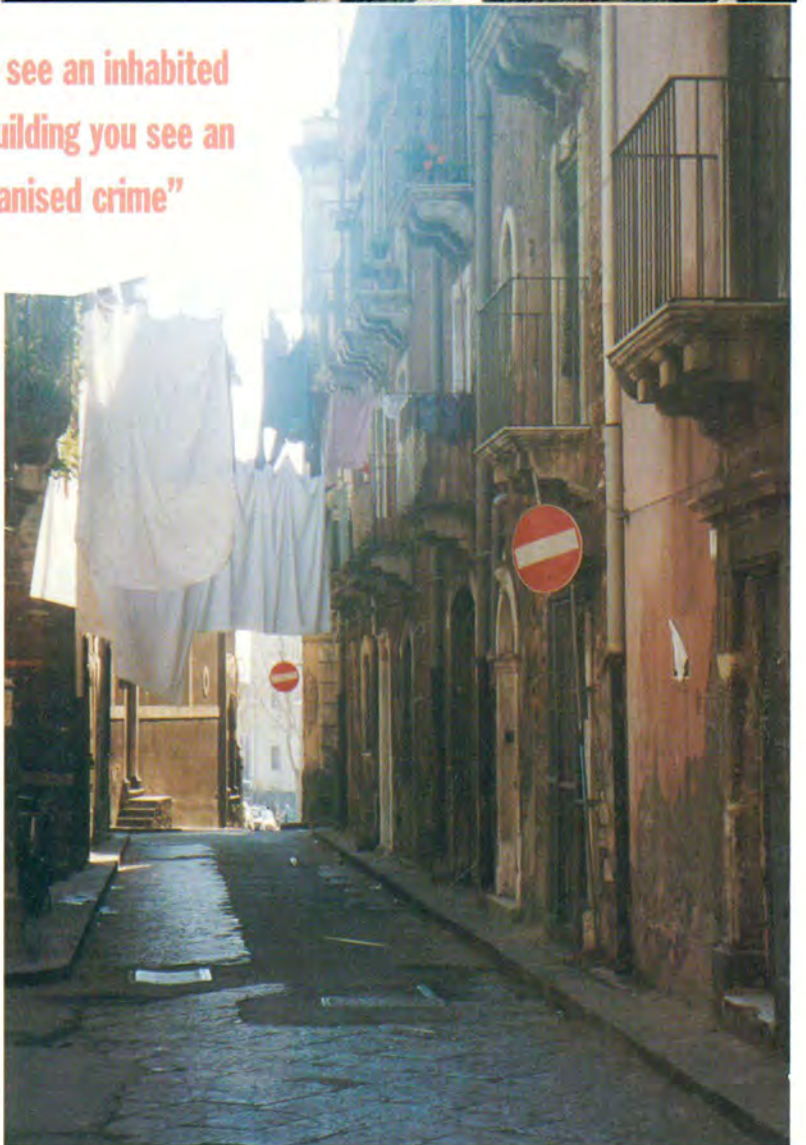


individual members should the need arise. However as part of the national response against the murder of the anti-Mafia judge Falcone in 1991 Lentini Baptist Church created a centre for documentation of the problems of Southern Italy (centro di documentazione sui problemi del Mezzogiorno). It has a small but comprehensive archive on subjects such as immigration, pollution, unemployment and of course the Mafia, and gives office space to a monthly alternative newspaper "Giro di Vita". (If you are connected to the Internet you can find the paper's home page at <http://www.sertel.it/girodivita/index.htm>). The centre also has an amateur theatre company. This is independent from the church but nearly all the participants are church members and the plays are actually written and produced by a church member. The plays, often comedies are performed in the Sicilian dialect and always tackle issues that are related to life in Sicily; such as the problems of immigration, racism, sexism, unemployment, the cost of dying, the Mafia. The intention of the theatre company, is through entertainment, to demonstrate the gospel in action, by speaking for the oppressed, poor and marginalised of society. While it is true that the centre was founded at a time of national anti-Mafia protest, it is not directly anti-Mafia. The aim of the

"Every time you see an inhabited but unfinished building you see an effect of organised crime"

centre is to provide a voice and point of reference for victims of the problems of southern Italy. This involves activities which help victims of any and all aspects of contemporary society, and attempts to understand the complexities behind many problems. This is not to be 'soft' on crime but maybe to be 'harder' on the causes of crime. ●

Chris Mattock, along with his wife Sarah, works for the BMS in Sicily





COPING WITH DEATH IN INDIA

ANN BOTHAMLEY TELLS OF DIFFERENT WAYS OF COPING WITH DEATH IN INDIA

The matter of death and funerals in India is quite a complicated one, and all the more complex depending whether you are a Christian, a Hindu or a Muslim, and also to

which strata of society you belong.

For Christians there is an obvious hope amidst the sadness that the person has gone to be with the Lord. The body will remain in the home for some time after death, "lying in state" as it were, with family members and friends visiting the house, and singing hymns around the body. For the funeral itself the body will be taken in an open coffin to the church, often in a van or a bullock cart.

After the service everyone will come and walk round the body, sometimes laying

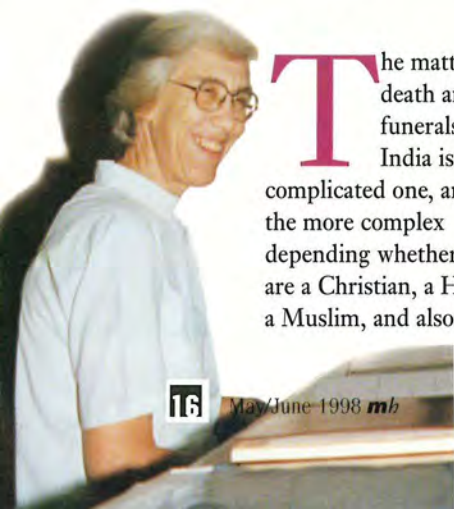
Christians are always buried. After ten days of mourning there may be a thanksgiving service, and a shared meal with other members of the community.

For the Hindu in India, death is always accompanied by the expression of grief in a very emotional way, with both men and women wailing and

crying. There is no acceptance of the death, as there is no future to look forward to, but only the fact that they will never see that person again. In



flowers or wreaths. From the church the procession will go to the cemetery, where another short service will take place -



the village setting the body may be kept out in the middle of the village street, perhaps under a canopy with blocks of ice around, where available, to preserve the body from the heat. The person will be dressed in their best clothes, often surrounded by flowers,

Hindus will never wear flowers or jewellery again.

For Muslims death brings a sense of resignation because "this is the will of Allah". So there will not be the emotional outburst of grief such as one sees with Hindus. The body will be prepared with three



and again people will come and visit the family, walk around the body, stay for some time and then leave. The body will then be placed on a bier in a sitting position, surrounded by garlands of flowers. The men will then carry the body, preceded by drums and sometimes a band, down to the riverside. All along the way people will let off crackers - a kind of firework which makes a loud explosion. This is to frighten away the evil spirits. At the burning ghat the body will be placed

white cotton cloths, and will remain in the family home for some time. People will come, sit and pray and just be with the family. At the time of the funeral the men will go to the mosque and bring back an open-sided bier that is kept there especially for people who have died. The body will be placed in this and carried back to the mosque. No women are allowed to be present once the body has left the home. Special prayers will be said at the mosque by the mullah before the body is

taken for burial. A coffin is never used. If it is the husband who has died, the wife will be kept in seclusion for 40 days and will not be allowed to see any other men - the women of the household look after her. At the end of the 40 days the household has a feast. This is seen as the end of mourning, but the anniversary of the death will be remembered with prayers being said at the mosque every year. ●

"...death and funerals in India are complicated"

constructed funeral pyre. The Hindu priest will conduct a special pooja prior to the burning. This will involve incantations, the pouring of oil and sometimes other substances. If it is a man who has died, the eldest son will usually be responsible for setting fire to the wood. His widow will be dressed in her finest clothes and jewellery, with flowers in her hair. This will then all be stripped off and she will be dressed in white. Thereafter many



Mike Pilavachi

Children of a merciful Father

I was watching Newsnight last evening and was very interested in a discussion that was going on. Jeremy Paxman was interviewing a film producer who was in the process of making a programme involving a real death scene. The discussion centred on the question of whether the filming of a live death scene was really good taste. At first the producer seemed to be making a good defence for his case. "Death is the final taboo," he said. "There is nothing wrong with dying a dignified death. We need to be able to see just how normal the process of dying really is."

Then, as the conversation went on, we viewers began to see a hidden agenda. Apparently a film had recently been shown of a 'mercy killing' in Holland which was supposedly very therapeutic. 'Mercy killing' - such a clever phrase that it almost sounds nice! What we are doing is pushing back the boundaries of what is acceptable. Under the guise of showing a beautiful death, came the undermining of the preciousness of life.

Mercy is ultimately an attribute of God. He is 'kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful' (Luke 6:35,36). To take an attribute of God and to link it to euthanasia is not only to deny God; it is also to play God. Every time in human history we have tried in our arrogance to take God's place the result has been a disaster.

As Christians we know that there is no fear in death and that it is certainly not a subject to be avoided. The sanctity of death, however, is inexplicably linked to the sanctity of life. Jesus overcame death on the cross and we must live this mortal life in the light of eternity. ●

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

Ann Bothamley is a nurse with the BMS working in the CMC Hospital, Vellore, India.



An *adventure* in faith

THEY SAY "LIFE BEGINS AT 40" BUT **SEAN CARTER** ALREADY HAS A LIFETIME OF EXPERIENCE AT THE AGE OF 29. **SAM GIBSON** REPORTS HOW THIS YOUNG MAN'S LIFE IS SHAPING UP TO BE A REAL ADVENTURE IN FAITH

Sean began his Christian life in his early 20s as a travelling evangelist and itinerant preacher.

He applied to South London Bible School, Clapham thinking a Bible school qualification would aid his developing ministry - but an invitation to preach at a church whose minister turned out to be the school principal led

to Sean being asked to join the school as a teacher! He has taught at the school for the past six years and still has not managed to gain his qualification!

In the midst of this, Sean felt called to the pastorate, "for a season". He came across Rural Ministries which concentrates in supporting village churches. Clipston is not one of its churches but they had approached Rural Ministries looking for a young pastor. The match felt right and in March 1994, Sean became pastor of a tiny elderly congregation of nine members.

It was to this tiny elderly

Sean in faith gave what he believed was a word of prophecy that God would use the church again to take the gospel to the nations

congregation that a few weeks after joining, Sean in faith gave what he believed was a word of prophecy that God would use the church again to take the gospel to the nations. It was at Clipston in 1791 that John Sutcliffe and Andrew Fuller preached on the need for world mission and the young William Carey was so fired up that he decided to begin his own ministry - later to become BMS.

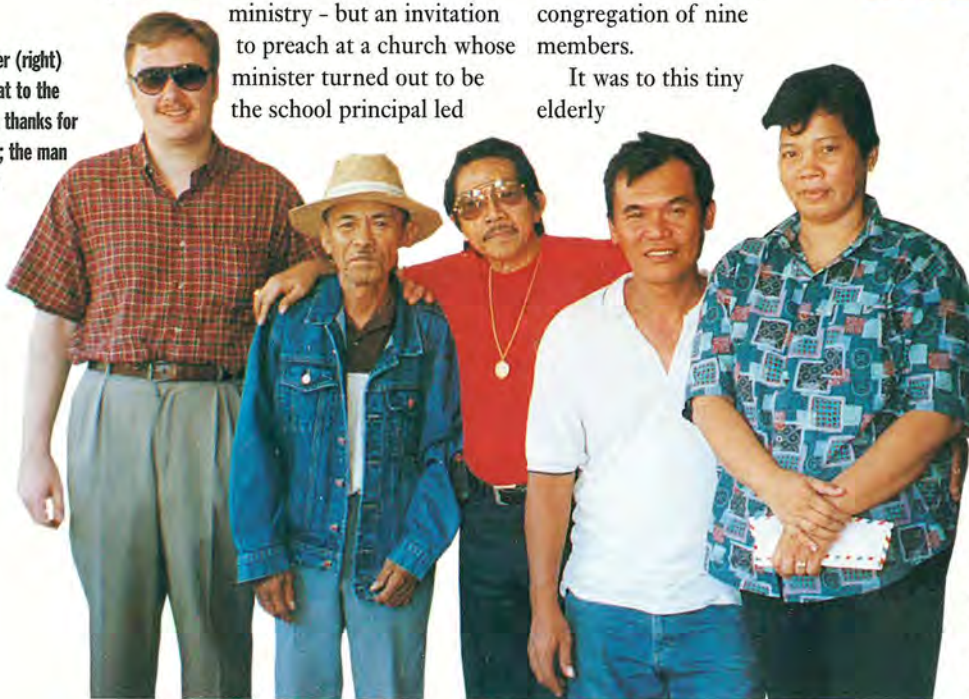
The initial sign was when Sky TV cameras and crew set up in the chapel to film "Thought for the Day" for broadcast on Christian Channel Europe. The church felt it was an initial sign that God could place this small village on the

international map. The local media showed an interest and guest speakers, unaware of the church's vision, also prophesied that people would come from a wide area to the church.

Sean has questioned the Lord as to whether more could be achieved through a large church in a city, but it seems God wants to deal with small numbers. He says, "We feel like Gideon's army" although numbers are slowly rising - currently 19 members plus children and visitors, with new Christians being added through the church's outreach.

Two years ago Sean felt the Lord saying that now was the time he would begin travelling overseas. A burden for the Philippines led to an invitation to speak at a national conference held by the Christian Church Fellowship

Sean Carter (right) gave his hat to the old man in thanks for hospitality; the man loved hats



in faith *An adventure*

International (CCFI) – a denomination in the Philippines.

After his first meeting with General Bishop Pat Hermosillia, leader of CCFI, Pat asked Sean to stay in the Philippines to work with CCFI, but Sean felt God wanted him in the UK. The next morning Pat said, "I believe the Holy Spirit has just whispered in my ear that you are a man worthy of becoming a bishop in our organisation". There was an ordination service that weekend and Sean was made an International Bishop with responsibility to oversee Filipino churches and small groups in the UK and Europe. The church was surprised when he came home!

His ordination has opened up the Philippines to Sean as CCFI has churches all over the country at which he can now minister freely. Other denominations in the Philippines and other countries also accept him more readily and are happy to allow him to work with them in leading evangelistic missions. He will be running short missions in Jamaica, Malaysia and Korea this year.

While visiting the Philippines Sean also attended a meeting between the government and church leaders when the Christian President Ramus shared his vision to build his nation on God's word and according to biblical principles; he also met Immelda (Meldy), the woman who was to become his wife. Now happily married she is expecting their first baby.

During this period Sean began a ministry called Counties for Christ. The original vision was to print a gospel booklet and distribute it to every



Top: Sean Carter and interpreter Bishop Metayo in Lete province.

Sean Carter with ministers at a Christian Church Fellowship International conference

Right: Immelda Carter



household in Northamptonshire, following up with missions and working with the local churches. Sean's missions overseas are also a part of this growing ministry. Currently it is involved in training local churches in evangelism (with a view to raising up future overseas workers), and raising money for overseas social projects.

In all his work throughout the UK and overseas, Sean's aim is to offer his services to the churches already doing the work. Unity is the word at the centre of his varied ministry with his motive to see God's Kingdom grow across denominations. "Doctrine," he says, "can be a stumbling block. So long as the fundamentals are the same and someone is my brother in Christ, the rest is secondary."

Where the Lord will lead Sean, Meldy and Clipston now is anyone's guess – but it will certainly be an adventure! ●



Above: President Ramus of the Philippines (front centre) with church leaders

in faith

FORT



Fortaleza

BY JOHN & NORMA CLARK,
ANDY & LINDA EAVES,
MARK & SUZANA GREENWOOD
& ALEX FROST



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

INTRODUCTION

As the plane passes over groups of Tapeba Indian houses among mangroves on the banks of the Ceará river a million tiny light bulbs fill the darkness below you, picking out small houses scattered

like lego pieces on the outskirts of town. Beyond the runway smart apartment blocks and broadcast towers litter the Atlantic coastline, jockeying for position with five star hotels and shining shopping centres.



Our Town



The Railway Favela,
where Andy and Linda
Eaves work

ALERA



It is said that, in world terms, Brazil has one of the most uneven distributions of wealth. It is a very rich country, with very few wealthy people and millions of underprivileged. They also say that within Brazil Fortaleza is one of the cities in this league. Four years ago a report said that 60 per cent of the city's population were living in houses built on invaded land, without planning permission. Statistics can be unreliable; observing transport in Fortaleza helps to give credibility to the figures; while sleek, new models of imported cars fill up at the pump, the bus terminals teem with crowds of people squeezing on to the stuffy vehicles of an overburdened public transport system. The population is roughly 2,200,000. Two million passengers pass through the bus turnstiles each day.

RICH AND POOR

Fortaleza has a sort of oblong shape. The top right hand corner is a microcosm of the technological advances of the nineties: Leisuredomes and the Internet, private health clinics of Swiss standards, cable television and cash tills which give immediate access to bank accounts in any country of the world, providing you are armed with your plastic and PIN. Together with a beautifully maintained esplanade, pier and restaurants along the front this Fortaleza is an ideal place for the rich to live or play.

The other three quarters fight to keep up. Some suburbs admirably reflect the lifestyle of the rich, with their own mini shopping centres, private schools and

well-kept banks, but most work hard, earn little and just about survive on overstretched public services suffering from poor administration or lack of adequate funding. Myriads of scruffy corner shops and informal butchers keep the locals fed and thousands of falling down builders' yards ply an unending trade to the families arriving from the interior or investing in "home improvements". Everyone, it seems, is an amateur building expert, and little regard is paid to planning permission or even, in some cases, to whom the land may belong. When you are fighting for a place in life getting by comes first and rules afterwards.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

by Alex Frost (aged 11)



Last July I went to visit my uncle Mark, Auntie Suzana and my new cousin Edward who live in Fortaleza. The things I remember about Fortaleza are:

- lots of trash on the road
- it didn't smell that nice
- children had lots of kites
- people looked happy but poor
- home-made toys
- not everyone had gardens
- sometimes people did not have clean clothes
- they only wear flip-flops on their feet, if anything
- scorching hot, lots of sun, never cloudy

- always went dark at 6.00 pm
- roads very bumpy
- people do not wear seat-belts
- not as many cars as in England
- People speak a different language (*Portuguese*)
- they use their hands a lot when speaking
- different food in the shops - they have more fruit as compared to our chocolates, sweets and crisps
- my favourite meal was one breakfast when we had savoury cake, other cake, crispy balls, tapioca and special bread.

PEOPLE AND ATMOSPHERE

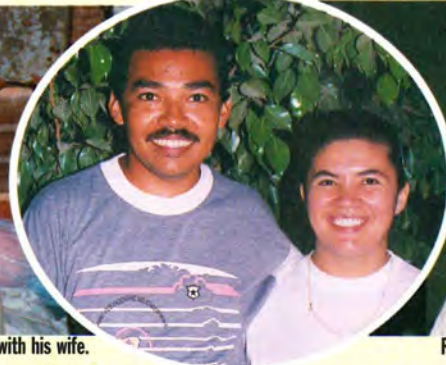
Fortaleza is scruffy yet beautiful. Gaudy, plastic shop fronts in the centre are interspersed with intricately painted, striking, colonial style buildings. Most suburbs attempt some sort of outdoor leisure area with greens and five-a-side football pitches. The people, perhaps, are the most colourful aspect, bringing humour, music, industry and initiative despite the struggles and tragedies.

Children's programme
in church
Holiday Bible Club





Favela home



Uiratã - with his wife.
He works with Mark Greenwood in the Genibau favela



Fatima - works with Mary Parsons on the Save the Child project

Mainly a mix of Indigenous and European blood, with African influences, Ceará adds its own style to the Brazilian look. Stifling heat does nothing to dampen the spirits. Noise is all around, emanating from corner bars, open-air restaurants, in-car public stereos and loud, evangelical preachers in numerous tiny chapels.

FOOD

One cannot write about Ceará without talk of food: Tapioca bread made of manioc flour, garnished with coconut milk; Baião de dois (mixed rice and beans) accompanied by sun-dried beef; Rapa dura (hard sugar cake) washed down with lashings of fizzy cashew fruit drink; Couscous and fried egg; all finished off with unimaginable tropical

fruit ice creams and sweet coffee make it a great place to eat.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Fortaleza's two million inhabitants reflect the varied spiritual spectrum of Brazil. They are very religious. A recent survey showed over 90 per cent believed in God. The vast majority of the population are nominally Roman Catholics. However behind that label lies another reality. Brazilian catholicism is highly syncretistic, absorbing into itself contradictory elements.

Spiritism is the unofficial religion of the vast majority of Brazilian Catholics. They believe in reincarnation, mediums and have mixed the belief in spirits with traditional beliefs in saints to an extent that it makes it difficult to distinguish

between them. Many Catholics will happily go to a spiritist session in the week and mass on Sunday. The historic shortage of Catholic priests and the vast distances within Brazil have meant that the majority of Catholics have grown up with little or no understanding of their faith. Spiritism is divided into many groups and is not to be seen as an organised religion.

Traditional Catholicism is very strong here with two of Brazil's largest pilgrimage centres near to Fortaleza. Roman Catholic charismatic groups are growing fast. They have meetings with 140,000 present in a local stadium.

There is little discrimination between Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and sects by society on the whole. They are all labelled as "crentes" (believers).

PROFILE - RAIMUNDO

Raimundo, a civil servant, worked in a country town. After drink had led to drunken brawls, knife fights and several days spent in police custody he



moved with his family to Fortaleza to make a new start. He brought his problem with him.

One Christmas he did what he had never done before and hit his wife and children. It was the last straw for Sanya and she went back to her parent's farm. Desperate, Raimundo sought help at the aptly named Hope Baptist Church. There he accepted Christ as Lord and Saviour. His life was transformed. Six months later Sanya returned with the children. The family are now active in starting a new work on a poor housing estate.



KINGDOM RESOURCES

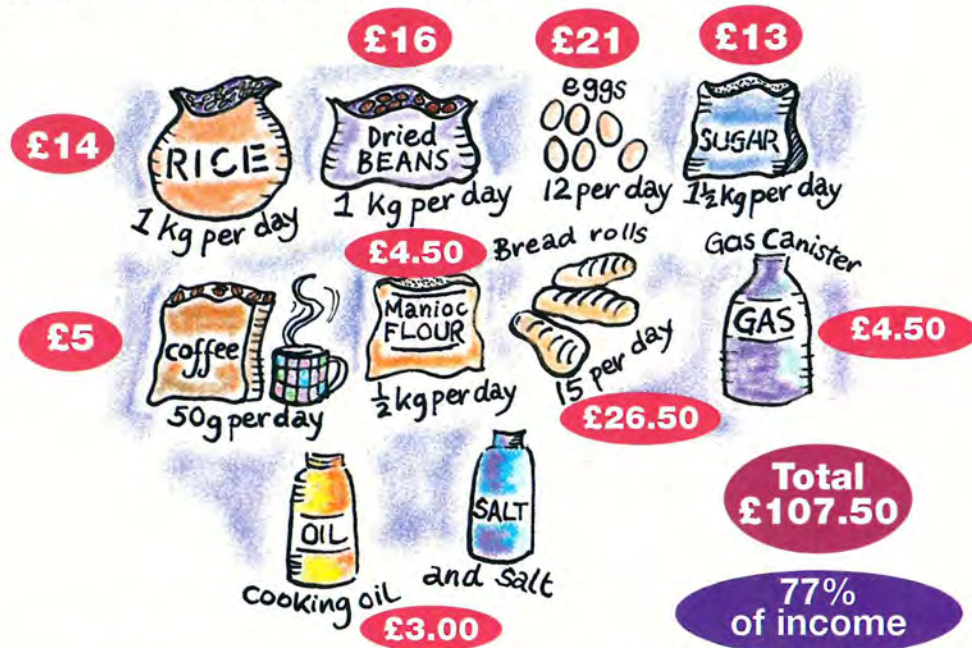
The Baptist Seminary in Fortaleza sees itself as a resource for training at all levels. There are basic courses for Sunday School teachers, preachers, administrators and musicians. Next year an extension course is planned that will take training to the isolated churches in the interior.

At a higher level there is the degree course in theology with options in missiology, biblical exegesis and religious education. Soon to start will be a new venture - a master's degree in theology using the Internet. It is hoped that this course will serve not only Ceará, but Portuguese speakers throughout the world. ●

COST OF LIVING

Fátima is 42, lives in the local favela and shares two small rooms with her five children, her granddaughter, mother, sister, two nephews, a great-nephew, a clutch of chickens and two dogs. The six adults and six children have a total income of about £180 a month comprising two state pensions and a little extra from odd cleaning and ironing jobs.

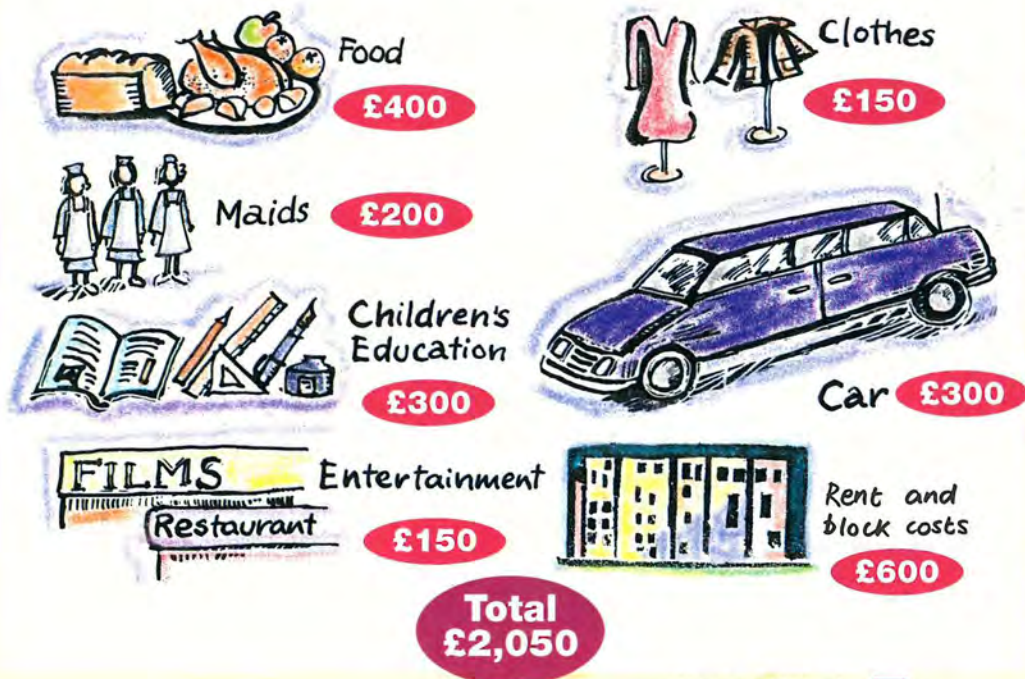
This is their basic shopping list each month:



The family buys everything from their corner shop as there they can have credit up to the value of the pensions. When the money arrives they have no choice but to hand it all over to the shop-keeper to clear the month's debt; and the process continues. Fátima wants to shop at the local supermarket where she would get more for her money but how can she?

Overlooking Fátima's favela are many high-rise apartment blocks, which are home to the middle class. A typical family is made up of two working parents, two children, three maids - one of whom "lives in", and two cars. Their total income would be around £2,500 a month.

Their monthly spending would be something like this:



The Democratic Republic of CONGO



Gilbert and his mud hut, Bwantaba, Bateke plateau

Six weeks doesn't sound a long jail sentence as these things go. Long enough, said Gilbert, who got home from Kinshasa's Makala prison with two others the night we arrived at Bwantaba. We were lodged in his mud hut. A member of the chief's family, he'd have no difficulty finding somewhere else to sleep, they said. Judging by the rejoicing and prolonged chatter that broke out in the middle of the night, they may not have slept anyway.

A week or two after the Kabila takeover we had learnt that the new military based at Mbankana had been raiding nearby cattle farms. Only when

Pastor Mbieme came to Kinshasa however, did we learn that Bwantaba young men, church members included, had been involved. Their families had eaten well for a few days.

"What action has the church taken?" we asked. Pastor Mbieme looked perplexed. "If we put them out of membership there won't be any church left," he said. "They're not showing up anyway and it's mainly women and children on a Sunday." Prospects for church growth at Bwantaba looked decidedly gloomy.

Such raids on the part of the military in fact precipitated their departure, once the victims' complaints reached the authorities in Kinshasa. For a time there were no forces of law and order at all on that part of the plateau.

Then, in October, 15 of the new police arrived at Mbankana under a commandant and began to make their presence felt. All hunters' guns must be registered, the villages

"Mysteriously, it transpired no-one would admit to having brought the charges."

cleaned up, every hut have an outside toilet and all children be in school. Fine, if there were the schools.

A month later Pastor Mbieme brought us up to date. Someone had lodged a complaint with the Mbankana authorities against the young men of Bwantaba, who had stolen cattle. Police had arrived in the village to arrest them, whereupon most had fled to the forest. Only the less fleet of foot, including Gilbert had been taken away, and held at Mbankana and then Maluku, before ending up in Makala prison.

Where the church meeting had failed to act, retribution, it seemed, would be coming from a different quarter. "God moves in a mysterious way ...," we said, but felt sorry all the same for Gilbert. Something of a country yokel, amiable

and peaceable, his image was hardly that of a cattle-rustler.

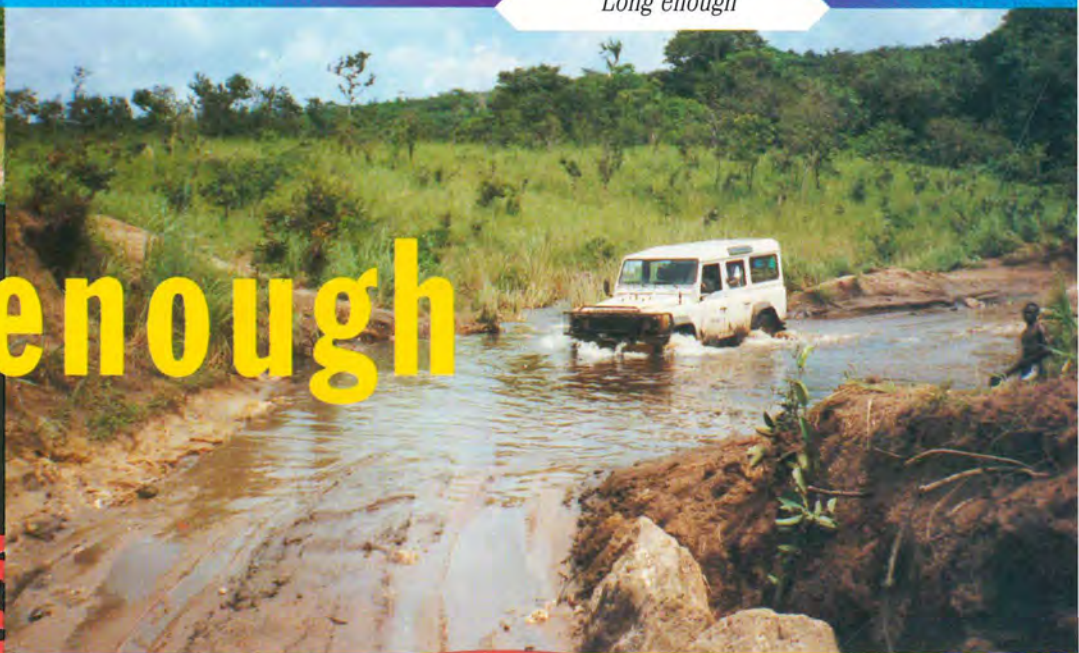
Bwantaba's chief designated Papa Pierre and others to make representations on behalf of the prisoners, which they did over the next few weeks at Mbankana, Maluku and Makala prison. The young men had been led astray by the military they argued and in any case, only two beasts had gone missing.

Mysteriously, it transpired no-one would admit to having brought the charges. The farm project managers said, no, they hadn't lost anything. It must have been chief Labi. No, said chief Labi, he had not made a complaint against anyone. With such a closing of ranks there was no charge to answer.

It only remained for the village families to raise the fines and "expenses" which would buy release. Eventually, armed with NZ7,000,000 (about US \$60) and two goats, the delegation engaged in a few days of haggle and time-wasting before Gilbert and Co were released. A lorry to the Mai Ndombe, a canoe across, and then 25 miles on foot got them back to the village at midnight, exhausted.

Next morning we thanked Gilbert for the use of his hut, and congratulated him on his release from prison. He looked thin, and said he was ill. Had they fed him? Not too well, but family members had brought food. Had he slept on a cold, hard floor? No, on a thick piece of sponge. It was no place to be, he said. A few weeks had been long enough.

Long enough



“... Mukoko ... gave thanks for the release and safe return of their unfortunate bretheren.”

On the Sunday, Mukoko did the pastoral prayer and gave thanks for the release and safe return of their unfortunate brethren. This appeared to bring the episode to a close. Only later did we learn that a debt remained to be settled with a local moneylender (shark) within the month, or else he would reclaim double the amount.

At least the air cleared enough to get to the purpose of our visit, which was to encourage each of the groups on the plateau to send their women leaders to a training seminar at Bwantaba in early January. Round the log fire that evening we tried to concentrate their minds on the logistics of lodging and feeding about 30 women from other villages. All would need to lend a hand - women, children (to fetch water and firewood) and the men too.

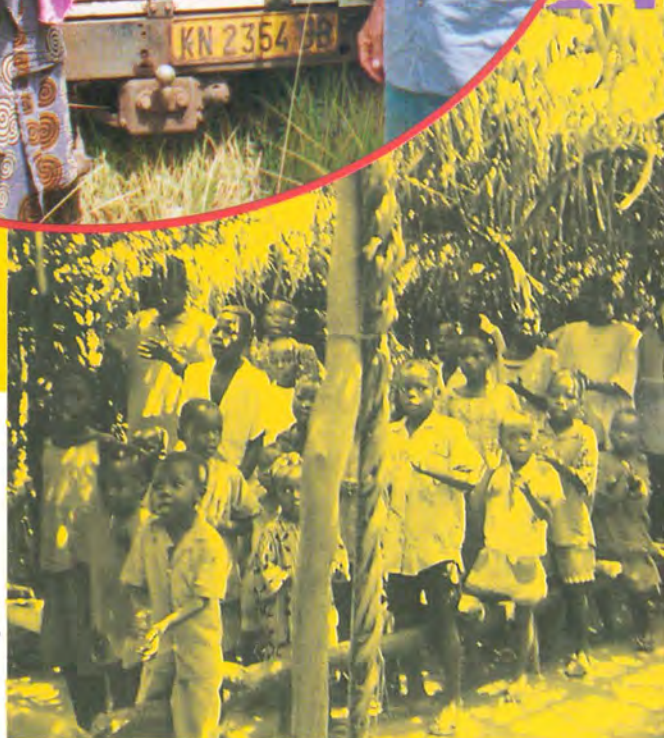
Next day we made the long journey home, giving a lift to Pastor Mbieme's wife and their married daughter, who had visited. Mama Mbieme, being small, volunteered to go in the back with the



Above: Return journey from Bwantaba with Pastor Mbieme's wife and daughter.

Below right: Bwantaba church, Bateke plateau

baggage. It was still a tight fit, and we joked about shutting her up in her prison. When finally released, some seven hours later, after a very rough ride, she was still remarkably cheerful. A long, hard journey, I said. Long enough, she rejoined. Even a day in prison can be quite long enough. ●



Living in a fra

Margaret Pitt was a BMS volunteer worker in Serbia. Here she recounts some of her experiences.

Iretired from work as a Social Services Manager in December 1995 and was accepted as a volunteer by BMS after I had completed the TEFL course in London. In March 1996 I went to teach for three terms, in a small Bible College in Novi Sad, in the former Yugoslavia, .

The students came from different backgrounds: a few came from Christian

homes and had come to faith when quite young. Others had been brought up, knowing nothing about God but had met him in quite remarkable ways. Here are some of their stories,



although the names of some have been changed.

Dragan was a punk, given to alcohol abuse and in his own words his way of life was "senseless and without morals". God's Spirit touched him and broke the bonds of evil that held him. Now he is the leader of the young people in the Baptist church and also of a very talented gospel band.

Dragan's wife, Snezana, comes from Macedonia and because of the poverty there she had to leave home at the age of 16 and go to Serbia to find employment. She was lonely and frightened and knew nothing about God except that she wanted to find him. She then met some Jehovah's Witnesses who gave her one of their Bibles. On her next journey home – an eight hour journey on a crowded train – she was sitting on her luggage reading this Bible when she noticed the man beside her was also reading a Bible. He was a Christian from Nepal and for the rest of the journey he explained the gospel to her and led her to faith in the Lord Jesus. She was

introduced to a local fellowship

where she met Dragan, and married him a year later. Now they are both training in the College.

Vladimir was another young man that I taught. He came from a strongly Communist family who were very proud when he joined the army at the outset of the war. I was talking one day about a visit I had made to Vukovar – a town that

Part of the cost of being a follower of Jesus for Vladimir is estrangement from his family.

had been devastated by the Yugoslavian National Army with great civilian loss of life. Vladimir then told me that he had been involved in that bombing, looting and killing. When he left the army he went to University in Novi Sad but had serious psychiatric problems and became an alcoholic. "But then I met Jesus " he told me, and his life was changed.

Vladimir is now a lovely gentle young man who is completing his theological training and is also working with his church among the thousands of refugees in Novi Sad. Part of the cost of



gile peace



War damage in Croatia

being a follower of Jesus for Vladimir is estrangement from his family.

Both the Baptist church and the College are involved in working with the

**Please tell people to
pray for us.**

It's not over yet.

many refugees who come daily for help. The refugees had to leave their homes in Bosnia and Croatia, often at a moment's notice. The workers in Tabita, the Humanitarian Aid Agency, distribute material aid that is sent from the West and also share the gospel whenever they can. There is a weekly meeting in the College building for the refugees called Open Door, when they have a Bible study, a cup of tea and an opportunity to share their views and grievances. Many are bitter and find it hard to forgive. The

houses where they stay sleep up to 80 people of both sexes and all ages in one large room. They sleep in rows of bunk beds, with scarcely enough room to walk between the rows and the lack of privacy is terrible. The Serbian Government offers no help and accepts no responsibility for people who used to live in another part of the former Yugoslavia.

The peace, especially in Bosnia is still very fragile. Poverty, inflation and massive unemployment are causing great problems but the fear of many is a further outbreak of war. Many of the young people have suffered both physically and mentally as a result of the war that they neither wanted nor understood. Please pray for healing for this land and a great movement of the Holy Spirit to bring revival. It is not easy being a Christian here and young converts often have to face strong opposition from their families and the Orthodox Church. The message I was asked to bring home to the churches in Britain was "Please tell people to pray for us. It's not over yet." ●



Where are they now?

Alison Wilson
(Action Team, Italy 1992/93)

Alison remains in regular contact with many of the people she met during her six months in north east Italy - and cherishes the letters they send.

For ten years, her dream was to study in America: "My experience in Italy showed me many things, one of the greatest being my need to study the Bible more 'effectively' and with greater depth and discipline". But first she decided to find out about life in the world of work. Organising courses and conferences for the oil industry in her university town of Aberdeen, there was ample opportunity to introduce her colleagues to the love of God. Later she began working as au-pair to the Margus family in Seattle, and was able to share the story of Jesus with the children and discuss her faith with the parents.

On the east side of town stands the Lutheran Bible Institute - just what Alison had been looking for, but enrolment seemed impossible "All the obstacles that were in my way - finances, visa requirements, accommodation - have been swept away by a provision from God the like of which I have never experienced before."

So, in September 1997, Alison began a nine-month certificate course in Biblical Studies and Theology. "My life seems so piecemeal but if you look at the whole picture there is such great purpose in all that has happened... I take comfort in looking back at the last ten years and seeing that a dream I had, to go to Bible college, is a dream God held and has now fulfilled." ●

Prayer focus



EUROPE



Mark and Claire Ord
Genova, ITALY

Mark and Claire are involved in pastoral work at Genova Baptist Church and are currently in consultation with the Italian Baptist Union about their next church placement. They have been encouraged by recent moves of the church to recognise and reach out to those in need in their local community.

Mark has been involved in a committee drawing together 12 different churches, which is looking at ways to work with immigrants and the unemployed in Genova. They are keeping an updated list of unemployed people and their skills in the churches, so that if people hear of work or need work done, they can use people from the churches. They are also collecting offers of free service from professionals for those who cannot afford their services. Thus far they have offers from a GP, an obstetrician, a paediatrician, a lawyer and a union representa-

union representative. Another benefit of this group is the contact between the churches. Relations between the historical and new churches in the area have been difficult in recent years so it has been quite amazing to see representatives of so many different traditions working together.

Please pray:

- the Ords are anxious to know where their next placement will be; they have been waiting some time to hear
- thank God for the positive contact between the local churches and pray for increased good relations and opportunities to work together

BRAZIL



David and Cath Meikle
São Paulo, BRAZIL

David is pastor of the church at Parque Selecta. They are seeing an increased commitment from the members to evangelise and use

their new church building for practical outreach into the community. Projects include teaching English and German and a few of the women are teaching various craft skills and hair dressing. Cath has begun a Well Woman clinic in the nearby favela, Montanhão (Big Mountain).

As well as being General Secretary of the ABC Association and teaching at a theological college, David is also co-ordinator of the state project at Heliopolis. He says: "When the builders walked away from a failed high-rise flat project in São Paulo, the poor moved in. At first they built shacks around the base of the concrete skeleton. Then families began to move in to the abandoned structure itself, creating walls out of waste wood and cardboard. That kind of scrappy approach to survival is what Heliopolis is all about. The community is one of the many favelas in São Paulo – unzoned, unserved neighbourhoods where the poor have taken over vacant land to build their own homes. Heliopolis, São Paulo's largest slum, has more than 100,000 people packed into 20 city blocks... Here we have a Project working in all areas of the community, we have a

church planted and two congregations meeting daily along with the Centre where we offer life and employment skills to the residents of the favela."

Please pray:

- for a new vision and wisdom in the tasks ahead for David, the Association and all his colleagues
- for safety as David travels long distances on often unsafe roads
- for the whole family as they settle into a new home

ASIA



Martin and Katrina Butterworth
Kathmandu, NEPAL

The Butterworths have been in Nepal since January 1997 involved in language and orientation study and beginning work involved in engineering and community health. Learning Nepali has been a long, slow and painful process for Martin especially but he finally had something to show for his effort when he



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

was invited to preach in their local church and managed to do at least part of it in Nepali.

Katrina began regular medical work in the New Year, renting a room to work from part-time with another missionary doctor, giving people an alternative to going to their homes. Many of their patients are very poor and their illnesses are often made worse by overcrowding and a poor diet. TB is very common.

Please pray:

- for increased language skills, so vital for Katrina in dealing with patients and Martin in his work with engineers on the Nepal Hydro and Electric project
- Martin is seeking increased opportunities for involvement in local church and community life



Janet Claxton
Vellore, INDIA

After retiring from her role as a full-time BMS missionary in Zaire, Janet decided she was

not quite ready for putting her feet up and applied to BMS as a Barnabas Project volunteer.

She is now based at Balanilayam Hostel, working alongside Ann Bothamley who began the hostel when she realised there was a need for the children of Indian Christian workers working in remote areas, to have the opportunity for a good education whilst living in a Christian family atmosphere. Ann, who is a Department Sister in the Christian Medical College Hospital, and her Australian friend, Marlienne, look after the 15 children currently in the hostel.

There are seven girls and eight boys ranging from seven to 17 years of age. They all attend Ida Scudder School where Janet, a school teacher, is working three mornings per week and giving help in Maths. She is also helping the teachers with project work, newly introduced into the syllabus, helps some small groups who struggle with Maths and occasionally takes classes when a teacher is absent.

The hostel building is currently being extended, although this is not without its difficulties, and a committee is

actively seeking Indian houseparents to take over the running of the hostel.

Please pray:

- for strength to cope with the demands of 15 children and a new country and culture
- that the Lord would lead the right couple to the hostel to take over care of the children



Around the world

Prayer focus



LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Please remember Steve and Pam Seymour and Jenny Dorman who have begun leave of absence, and Glyn and Frankie Phillips who recently ended their service with BMS.



Steve and Pam Seymour
ZIMBABWE

Steve and Pam have left Zimbabwe after four years and moved to Steve's native Australia. The transition has not been easy and it was difficult to leave their many friends behind. The couple are renting a house in Adelaide and are still searching for a church to call home.

Please pray:

- that the Lord will guide them



Jenny Dorman
NEPAL

Jenny Dorman has returned to the UK after four years teaching English to senior Nepali staff of the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). After a period of Home Assignment visiting UK churches, she is to embark on a year of full-time study building on a distance learning programme she completed with the Open Theological College.

Please pray:

- for her as she settles back in the UK and pray God will guide her as to her future with BMS



Glyn and Frankie Phillips
NEPAL

Glyn and Frankie were sad to be told by doctors that they should return to the UK after

nearly three years in Nepal. For the last two years, Glyn, who is an electrical engineer, had been planning with the Butwal project he worked on, what to do with a large sum of money which was expected. The money came through just as he was packing up the couple's home and he is frustrated he will not be there to help guide his Nepali colleagues in how to use it.

Please pray:

- that God will guide them wisely and pray for Glyn and Frankie as they unexpectedly begin to settle into a new life back in the UK



Around the world

Life Expectancy

	Men (years)	Women (years)	Average
Angola	-	-	46.5
Bangladesh	58.1	58.2	58.1
Belgium	73.9	80.6	77.3
Brazil	63.4	71.2	67.3
Central African Rep	-	-	48.6
DR Congo	51.3	54.5	52.9
France	74.6	82.9	78.8
India	62.1	62.7	62.4
Indonesia	63.3	67.0	65.1
Italy	75.1	81.4	78.3
Japan (highest)	76.9	82.9	80.0
Nepal	-	-	57.3
Portugal	71.8	78.9	75.4
Sierra Leone (lowest)	-	-	37.5
South Africa	62.3	68.3	65.2
Sri Lanka	-	-	73.1
Thailand	66.3	72.3	69.3
United Kingdom	74.5	79.8	77.1
Zimbabwe	47.6	49.4	48.5

Birth rates

	Crude birth rate*	Crude death rate
	per 1,000 population	
Afghanistan (highest birth rate)	53.4	20.8
Angola	47.7	18.7
Bangladesh	26.8	9.7
Belgium	11.2	10.5
Brazil	19.6	7.1
Central African Rep	37.6	16.4
DR Congo	44.9	13.5
Estonia (lowest birth rate)	9.0	-
France	11.6	9.1
India	25.2	9.0
Indonesia	23.1	7.6
Italy	9.1	9.9
Kuwait (lowest death rate)	-	2.2
Nepal	-	11.0
Portugal	11.2	10.9
Sierra Leone (highest death rate)	46.5	25.7
South Africa	29.7	7.9
Thailand	16.7	6.6
United Kingdom	11.9	11.1
Zimbabwe	37.1	14.6

*the crude birth rate is the number of live births in one year per 1,000 population.

Under five mortality

per 1,000 live births	
Albania	41
Angola	292
Bangladesh	117
Belgium	10
Brazil	61
Central African Rep.	180
DR Congo	175
El Salvador	56
Finland	5*
France	9
India	119
Indonesia	111
Italy	8
Nepal	118
Nicaragua	68
Niger (highest)	32
Portugal	11
South Africa	68
Sri Lanka	19
Thailand	32
United Kingdom	7
Zimbabwe	81

* equal lowest with Iceland, and Sweden

(Latest available figures)

Cost of funerals around the world

Belgium £2500 (three month's salary) for cheapest basic funeral. This would include the services of the funeral director, the cost of the coffin, and a cup of coffee.

India (christian village funeral) Rs 2,000 (where Rs 40 is a daily wage for an agricultural worker) plus the community meal which would cost anything between Rs 2,000 and Rs 5,000. The family might borrow money for this. (Hindus) anything from Rs 1,000 to Rs 10,000.

Sri Lanka (all except Muslims who are buried the same day), the casket and embalming will cost anything between Rs 15,000 and Rs 65,000.

Sicily anything from 2,700,000 lit to over 20,000,000 lit for hearse, tomb, and permits. A middle class professional monthly salary would be 3,000,000 lit.

El Salvador 3,000 to 4,000 colones plus 10,500 colones for a basic plot in a commercial cemetery. (The minimum wage is 1050 colones - about £80 per month). The poorer people can only use the cheaper, overcrowded and ill kept public cemeteries.

Bangladesh (Christian) £20 - to make the wooden coffin, £10 for candles, scent and new clothes, £20 for the tea following the prayer meeting a week after the burial. (Hindu) at least £200 - wood has to be bought for the cremation plus rice meal given to large numbers.

Brazil (North East) R60,00 (half the minimum wage). This would buy the cheapest coffin and white grave clothes plus R2 for a bottle of raw rum to pay someone to dig the grave and R2 for two announcements on the radio for relatives who live further away.

Zimbabwe Z\$ 1,200 (£40) for an average adult coffin plus up to Z\$20,000 (£650) for car hire, buses, undertakers. A middle class person earns about £60 a week.

France - 12,000 fr to 15,000 fr not including the service or the flowers. The minimum take home wage is around 5,500 fr/month.

TAKE 2

Take 2
a resource for
church leaders
& workers

RESOURCES for leaders

FACTBOX

In **Belgium** there are set times for funerals: 9.00am, 10.00am, 11.00am etc. The later it is the more expensive it is! An afternoon or early evening funeral will be costly, but will be preferred to impress and avoid criticism.

In **Nepal** only the lower castes bury their dead and they do this by placing the body (no coffin) in a hole they have dug in their own land. After a Hindu funeral the family will not eat salt for ten days as part of the period of mourning.

In **Sri Lanka** christian hymns will always include "There's a land of pure delight" and "Safe in the arms of Jesus". In Sri Lanka the wreath stand legs are broken after the burial to prevent them being resold to someone else later on.

In **Italy** the body may not be moved from the place of death for 24 hours, not even placed in a coffin. Cremations are rare; the nearest crematorium to Sicily is Rome.

In **Bangladesh** the women and children wash and prepare the body in new clothes. They also light candles and pour scent on the body. The men and the boys dig the grave.

In **El Salvador** friends of the family will organise door-to-door collections in local neighbourhoods to help with the funeral expenses.

In **Brazil** the only time most people wear socks is as part of their grave clothes. In North East Brazil most people do not have the money to pay for a coffin themselves, so a local politician will usually arrange it.

In **Zimbabwe** people are expected to live up to the age of 60 plus. In reality 45 per cent won't live that long.

In **France** people are buried in family groups and the body is taken back to the place from which the family comes. Most people arrange for a 30 year lease on a plot of land. Cremation was forbidden by the Catholic church until 1963 and still is unusual today.

Thanks to:

- Joyce and Stuart Filby, Belgium
- Paul Drinkwater, Nepal
- Ann Bothamley, India
- Margaret Goodall, Sri Lanka
- Chris Mattock, Italy
- David Quinney Mee, El Salvador
- Sue Headlam, Bangladesh
- Daveen Wilson, Brazil
- Bernard Phiri, UK Action Team
- John Wilson, France

For discussion

How do we in our society mark the end of a life? Evaluate both good and bad points in what is done.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Distinguishing ideas

One of the greatest difficulties for missionaries is to distinguish between ideas cultural and ideas Christian. Western democracy is just that, western.

There are few places more democratic than an African village, but it is not our democracy, and existed before Christianity came. Even in African countries which are overwhelmingly Christian the man in the street believes in the power of the word. The man who says it will be wrong is seen as being responsible for the failure. Western democracy believes in an opposition. In African eyes the opposition is the source of all failings, hence one party states.

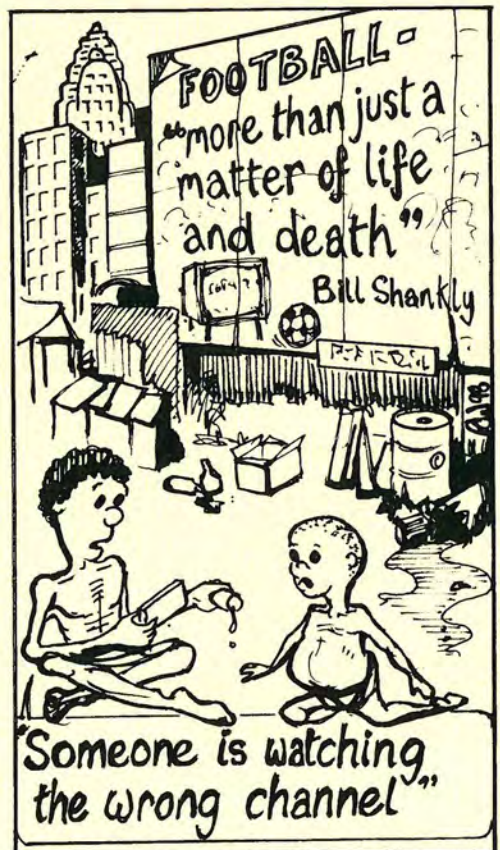
It is also interesting to speculate that for 80 per cent of the church's life the majority of the western world was without large scale democracy.

Democracy is a wonderful modern western invention, but it should not be confused with Christianity. Christianity is concerned with honesty truthfulness and love and it is not a political system.

Yours sincerely

Bob Ellett

Butwal, Nepal



Cartoon by Philip Webb

The WAY I SEE IT



ANOTHER EXTRACT FROM THE (WHOLLY IMAGINARY) PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE OF PHILIP CLEMENTS-JEWERY

DEAR VAL

I was delighted when I visited your church recently to see how much you are on the ball with your work as missionary secretary. I was impressed by your notice board and how up-to-date you are keeping it. It was also good to see the way you are keeping in touch with your link missionaries and ensuring that everyone in the church hears the latest news. The number of people you have who take *mb* is really impressive! I was also pleased to learn that there is a regular 'spot' for BMS matters in Sunday morning services and that the BMS Prayer Guide and Prayer Tapes are regularly used in the weekly programme of the church. Keep up the good work!

Yours

Philip

DEAR PHILIP

Thank you for your encouraging letter. Yes, I have found that what I have been doing has paid off in terms of missionary interest in our church. It has also led to increased giving to the work of the BMS and above all, to prayer. The folk here are excited by the replies they get to their letters and e-mails they have sent to our link missionary family. It matters a lot to them that we have this personal link.

Yours in Christ

Val

DEAR VAL

Thanks for your letter. However, I confess I do have a slight worry about what you have been doing, in spite of its real and impressive achievements. Today the world-wide mission of the Church is no longer about churches in the developed world sending people to materially poor and spiritually deprived countries. In some ways, it is now we who are poor and Christians overseas who have so much to offer us. These days there is much more emphasis on partnership in the gospel and in what is called 'reverse-flow'. I wonder how it is possible to keep up interest in overseas mission in the local congregation if the emphasis is more on partnership than on missionaries. Do you have any ideas about this?

Your fellow-worker in the gospel

Philip

DEAR PHILIP

You have a point but I fear that if we lessened the emphasis on sending missionaries, the interest in the work of BMS here would also be reduced. The concept of 'partnership' does not have a face or a name like a missionary. Also, people find it much easier to give than to receive. It's hard to admit that we might be lacking spiritually in some way and that our fellow Christians overseas might have something to share with us. But I do try to publicise information about national churches as well as give prominence to our link missionaries. I will also write to World Mission Link at Didcot to see if they have any suggestions in this respect. Anyway, thank you for making me think about my job as missionary secretary.

With love and best wishes

Val

Action Card

Environmental Pollution

Bhopal remains in our memory as a bitter disaster. Although there have been improvements, many problems remain. Chemicals which are banned in the West because they are dangerous, are still exported – notably DDT. The extent of consequences is not always realised. Dr Lall, General Secretary of the Church of North India, provides the following information. "In Ludhiana, 60 samples of milk were found to be contaminated with DDT and 73 per cent of the residue was much above the tolerance level. DDT residues were found in all 112 samples of bovine milk collected from four villages on the Sangurur district of Punjab.

The chemical industry contributes about seven per cent to India's Gross National Product and employs six per cent of the industrial labour force. India has a growing chemical industry and control is a problem. More deaths occur among workers in the chemical industry than any other. After the Bhopal tragedy the Indian government, together with the International Labour Organisation, identified 307 major hazardous industrial units, the highest number being in Gujarat. In an outbreak of toxic poisoning in Bitchiri, 60 wells were contaminated, hundreds of livestock died, 500 acres of agricultural land became uncultivable and drinking water was no longer available within a



five kilometre radius. A drilled rig commissioned by official agencies revealed that the water was polluted to a depth of 200 feet. This toxic effluent had been produced by five companies and it had been flowing for a year before it was detected by the central government."

Please send this month's card to Mr Nirmal Andrews, Joint Secretary, Ministry of the Environment, CGO Complex, New Delhi, India. Encourage him and his team to carry out their essential task of protecting and improving the environment in India ●

BMS, Baptist Union, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church, United Reformed Church.



SHORT-TERM HOSTEL PARENTS

Short-term hostel parents are needed for three months from January to March 1999, at KISC (Kathmandu International Study Centre) in Kathmandu.

KISC is a school run jointly between INF (International Nepal Fellowship) and UMN (United Mission to Nepal) and has students from 11 to 17. The hostel will have one 16/17 year old and the rest will be younger.

Interested? For more details please contact Carolyn Cole, BMS Volunteer Co-ordinator. Tel 01235 512077.

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Putting a piece of the UK Action on hold....

In the March/April issue of *mh*, we asked if your church would be interested in hosting the 28:19 UK Action team during 1998/1999. We have had many responses and have successfully contacted seven churches around the UK that are looking forward to working with the team. Therefore, all the placements for the team have now been booked up so if you didn't get in with your request quickly enough, I'm afraid you will have to wait until 2000! If you would like a week's visit from any of the other 28:19 Action Teams from April to June 1999 please contact your BMS Co-ordinator.

Checkout

Missionary Movements

MAY

Arrivals

Sheila Samuels from Delhi, India
Kevin and Linda Donaghy from Lisbon, Portugal
Stuart and Joyce Filby from Ostende, Belgium

Departures

Stuart and Joyce Filby to Ostende, Belgium
Margot Bafende to Mbanza Ngungu, Democratic Republic of Congo

JUNE

Arrivals

Katie Norris from Jumla, Nepal
David Payne from Kathmandu, Nepal
Christine Preston from Kathmandu, Nepal
Margaret Swires from Natal, Brazil

Departures

Kevin and Linda Donaghy to Lisbon, Portugal

Antonio was six feet tall, had an enormous nose, was as strong as an ox, and was 45 years old. But he went down with hepatitis. I visited him on various occasions, and when he died his wife – a little Japanese woman called Maria – sent for me to do his funeral. I arrived at the house feeling terrible, as unknowingly I myself was already ill with the same disease.

The Last Word

The little wooden house and garden were overflowing with people. The coffin with Antonio – who was a bright yellow – was on the table in the kitchen where everybody could see them. Before long the wife, who was busy at the stove beside her dead husband, brought me an enormous plate of rice and beans, with a great piece of greasy meat on top. The very sight and smell of the food along with the temperature of almost 100 degrees just about finished me off!

GERRY MYHILL

Gerry Myhill is a BMS missionary working in Antonina, Brazil

I picked my way down the garden stopping to talk to others until I came to the well at the bottom. I sat on the edge of the well, toying with the food, pretending to eat it. Antonio's dog had followed me, and sat at my feet. While nobody was looking I flipped the meat onto the ground beside him; he looked at me, looked at the meat, and then



ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH PRENTICE

carefully picked it up and took it up to the house where he laid it neatly beside the coffin. Within minutes Maria came running down the garden, calling out "Pastor, the dog has stolen your meat!" She then placed an even larger and greasier piece on my plate to replace it.

When it came to the time to take the coffin out we had

"... the wife, who was busy at the stove beside her dead husband, brought me an enormous plate of rice and beans."

to take part of the side of the house out to make room, as the doorway wasn't wide enough. It was now teeming down in a tropical storm after the build-up of the heat of the day.

We had to carry the coffin on our shoulders for about a mile to the graveyard up on

the hill. The rain continued and on arrival we had to find the shovels, and dig a hole. We were trying to convince ourselves that the hole was deep enough when Maria broke in with "but Pastor, Antonio's nose will stick out of the ground". We dug on; the rains fell, and eventually Antonio was safely buried to everybody's satisfaction.

The next morning I awoke, feeling terrible. On arrival in front of the bathroom mirror I discovered that I was exactly the same colour as Antonio had been the day before! ●



Harvest Appeal 98

BMS/Operation Agri



a harvest of health

Parbati's story

Parbati looks the picture of health. Life has dramatically changed for her since the Gorkha Community Health Programme came to her village in Nepal.

People like Parbati are dying daily because of:

- inadequate nutrition
- dirty and polluted water
- poor sanitation
- insufficient knowledge about health issues

Give someone a harvest of health this year!

Make sure you get the **July/August** issue of **mb**, containing a special eight-page pull-out section, featuring the Gorkha Community Health Programme, and harvest celebration ideas.

A resource pack will also be available, including : ● a poster, ● fact sheet, ● gift envelopes, ● youth and childrens' resource, ● OHPs and a video filmed on location in Gorkha.

**To subscribe to mb phone Rob Vaines on 01235 512077 ext 283,
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