



ENCOURAGEMENTS JUST KEEP COMING



A visit from Laurie and Gwen Peake's tag-a-long tour as well as patrol visits to station owners has brought a growing list of encouragements for Stephen and Rosalie Goldsmith.

The Goldsmiths patrol the entire region of North Western NSW for the Presbyterian Inland Mission (PIM) in an area known as the Darling Patrol. In recent visits they have had opportunities to informally speak about many gospel issues, help people in various practical ways, provide support to Christians living in remote areas, give away *Challenge* newspapers and copies of the Bible.

Stephen says that he 'never ceases to wonder at God's perfect timing, it's just amazing'.

On a recent patrol, he and Ro-

salie stopped for a few minutes on the side of a remote track to record some details of their last visit. Unexpectedly a man pulled up beside them on a quad bike and a spiritually encouraging conversation soon unfolded. It wasn't long before the Goldsmiths found themselves back at this station owner's home meeting and spending time with his entire family.

Another real encouragement was the visit of the Peake's tag-a-long tour. Stephen said that it was good to travel with others for a change. 'They could experience some of the conditions we face as well as the constant dust that we live in.' One evening was spent at Wanaaring with some local Christian families where Laurie led the group in devotions and gave a

children's message.

Stephen and Rosalie are looking forward to visiting Victoria later this year to attend the Centenary celebration service. This service will be held at Scots Presbyterian Church on September 22 at 7pm. All the patrol padres will be there on the night and it will be an opportunity to reflect on the past 100 years of inland ministry as well as look forward to new spheres of service. Patrol padres and committee members are available to speak in congregations on the Sunday.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of Australia, Rt Rev David Jones, will be the preacher on the evening.

Martin de Pyle

Coordinator, PIM Centenary Committee

In the photo above: Stephen and Rosalie Goldsmith are looking forward to visiting Victoria in September

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Deadline
for next
edition:
1 November

Set to **Engage:** new youth leaders conference

Who wouldn't want to spend the Australia Day long weekend at Phillip Island next year? No doubt there'll be warm beaches, a sparkling ocean, cute penguins, great company and excellent Bible teaching.

That's if you come to *Engage 2013*, the new youth leaders conference that is sure to start off your year with a bang of Bible teaching fireworks. To discover what it will be like, *fellow workers* sits down to quiz Joy Venning. She's a busy lady: she serves as youth worker at Canterbury Presbyterian Church, she's the Convenor of the Presbyterian Youth Victoria Council, and she's on the *Engage*

planning committee.

She's also buzzing with excitement. 'I'm really, really keen to see youth leaders exposed to really good Bible teaching, and trained in how to do it themselves. I want to see great Bible teaching being a priority in youth ministries, and to see it impact young people.'

'*Engage* seeks to prioritise Bible teaching as the most important part of ministry, and to see the delegates who come along equipped to handle the Bible better. The bulk of the conference will be made up of the strand sessions, which is small group work with two strand leaders. In a nutshell, you'll be learning how to prepare good Bible

studies. But alongside that, each morning we'll have preaching from our keynote speaker, Rev. Raj Gupta. He'll demonstrate the same model that you will be learning in your strand groups in the way he speaks. So you'll get to see what you're learning how to do.

'There'll also be music, there'll be workshops where we can think strategically about youth ministry, and there'll be time for delegates to meet with their church teams—if you come as part of a youth ministry team. There'll be time for you to sit down and explore how you can apply what you've learnt back in your own church. I'm also really looking forward to just spending time with leaders from around the state, drinking coffee, going for a swim at the beach, playing cricket, chatting on the deck...' Joy pauses, but it's not because she's run out of things to say. It seems that there are too many things about *Engage* that she's looking forward to, and it's hard to say them all at once. She settles on one with a smile. 'It'll be so great to have fellowship with heaps of other youth ministry leaders.'

'*Engage* is targeted at people involved in youth ministry, not just young leaders or new leaders, but youth workers, 'mum and dad' leaders, and anyone involved in ministry to teenagers. The skills learned can be applied to any area of ministry, so I would say, send your people doing kids ministry, young adults ministry, elders, or people in your church who are leading Bible studies. Even ministers could be interested. The

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main focus of what we're doing is learning to teach the Bible better.'

The *Engage* committee has gratefully received support from *Next Generation*, a conference run by Katoomba Christian Convention in NSW. They run an interdenominational ministry that has been providing Bible preaching conventions in Katoomba since 1903. Joy explains how they've helped out. 'They have prepared a lot of the strand material. They've been doing this for twenty or thirty years, so they've kindly given us their material to use, and we went to their conference back in January, to see what they do. They're really supportive of seeing this kind of thing happen in Victoria.'

'I get to work pretty closely with our keynote speaker, which is really exciting. His name is Rev. Raj Gupta, and he's the Senior Pastor of an Anglican Church in Sydney. He's been involved in organising *Next Gen* for over fifteen years, and he loves to see the next generation equipped to serve Jesus. He's going to preach on the Sermon on the Mount, from Matthew, and show us how a genuine commitment to Jesus changes everything. I'm really

excited to work with Raj because he's passionate about what we're doing, and a genuine servant.

'We've got a great team of people working hard to organise *Engage*. The chairman of the committee is Rev. Nello Barbieri, the PCV Training Officer. The team is made up of Rev. Brian Harvey



Joy is pumped about the opportunities *Engage* presents.

(Youth Ministries Director for PYV), Andrew Wort (Youth Pastor at Bundoora Presbyterian), John Huynh (Minister at Surrey Hills Presbyterian Church) Pete Sorrenson, (Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students staff worker), Pastor Toby McIntosh, (Warrnam-

bool Presbyterian Church), Chiara Bilyj (PYV Councillor and *fellow workers* editor), and finally, me!

'I would really, really encourage churches to send people to *Engage*, as an investment in their church.' Joy leans forward earnestly, emphasising each word. 'Find ways to support young people to go to this, because it will be worth it! We're here to help train your youth leaders.'

'I hope it will really impact local churches – just to have more hands, trained and equipped, ready to open the Bible and to teach it well. Even just personally, you'll learn how to engage with Scripture better, how to read the Bible better and to understand it more deeply.'

Victorians in youth ministry have been waiting for a conference like *Engage* for a long time. Some are desperate for the Bible training, while others long for the encouragement of fellowship with like-minded people. *Engage* hopes to fill these needs. It aims to equip the generations to come with effective skills to share the gospel and grow the church. Please pray for *Engage*. Please come!

Chiara Bilyj
Editor

All the details on *Engage 2013* will arrive at your church very soon. Ask your Minister or Session Clerk for fliers, or call Nello Barbieri on 0403 569 946.

engage^{'13}

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Engage '13 takes the gospel seriously and wants to train youth leaders, and future leaders, to have Bible focused and gospel driven ministries.

The best way to do this is to teach the Bible well and to model how to teach the Bible well.

Rev. Nello Barbieri

Engage '13 Conference Chairman

Rev Dr Thang Bwee visits from Myanmar



Dr Bwee and Pastor Ian Smith

Recently on a Sunday morning, about forty-five people from various church groups in Nhill and Kaniva shared in a worship service and a cross-cultural experience at the Nhill Presbyterian Church. Representatives of the Karen community were delighted to meet with Rev Dr Thang Bwee who was visiting Nhill and Kaniva from Myanmar. Dr Bwee was invited to meet the communities and speak as part of his two-month visit to Australia. By the conclusion of his visit, Dr Bwee will have met with members of seventy Presbyterian Churches in Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria.

In Kaniva on Saturday night, an

opportunity to meet Thang was provided at a coffee and cake evening. In Nhill, after the worship service on Sunday, about thirty people enjoyed a Power Point presentation of the effort being made to re-value the lives of both young and old in various parts of Myanmar. Those attending were surprised to hear that, in country regions of Myanmar, there were high schools without teachers and hospitals without doctors or nurses. Equally surprising for the majority Buddhist communities in Myanmar, was the help provided for all people groups by the Christian church following a cyclone that destroyed many villages and caused the death of 150,000 people.

Dr Bwee's church group also provides hostel accommodation for young people so they can attend government schools in the major population centres. By so doing, hope for a better future is given to the next generation. Dr Bwee's presentation helped

contrast the relative wealth and high living standards of communities in Australia with those in Myanmar, and fitted well with his sermon message: 'freedom is a spiritual state of people's lives in Jesus Christ and not a physical state imposed by mankind on a person.' Pastor Ian Smith from the Presbyterian Church said it was a great encouragement and privilege to have Dr Bwee visit the region and reflects the local community values of sharing with, and caring for, the less well off in the world, as Jesus has called us to do. It is hoped that there will be an ongoing connection with Dr Bwee's group, now that contact has been established. 'We wish to thank all involved in making the occasion a success and those who contribute to the work via Mission Partners,' Pastor Ian said.

Pastor Ian Smith

Kaniva Nhill Presbyterian Church

Tricky times with toddlers

On Monday 21 May, Ann Hutton from Ballarat West Parish came and spoke to the young mothers at Skipton on Tricky Times With Toddlers: eating, shopping, playing, TV and sleeping.

Ann spoke in a friendly and candid way, and it was a very enjoyable time for everyone once again. Ann has been the guest speaker for the past two years.

Soyoung Lim taught the toddlers, helping them each to make a book on colours and shapes.

After the craft, we had morning tea together.

Jean Stimson had the challenging task of reading books to the children, and trying to keep them away from their mothers while Ann was speaking.

Thanks also to Belle McKerrow for helping out in the kitchen.

Skipton Lismore Parish runs the



Jean Stimson entertained the young ones while Ann spoke to their mothers.

Café and Library Program monthly. Young mothers from the community come for a chat & morning tea. Activities for toddlers include story-telling, craft, sing-along and

puppet show.

Hui Lim

Minister, Skipton-Lismore Parish



FELLOW WORKERS

Defining Marriage Webcast



On Tuesday June 26, thirty two people from six different congregations, including some from another denomination, gathered at Heathmont House at Heathmont Presbyterian Church to take in the now familiar question and answer format adapted by the Australian Christian Lobby (ACL).

The Defining Marriage webcast was perhaps a unique technical presentation as a live-to-air program, filmed before a studio audience and specifically designed for the Christian sector across Australia, for which ACL should be commended and supported. But, that innovation aside, it was a most helpful and necessary 'lightning tour' around some of the problems associated with the current and persistent push for same sex marriage within our society, taken from a Christian standpoint.

Those who viewed this webcast were treated to a professional adjudicator, Karl Faase, moderating five well-qualified panel members. They were: politician John Anderson, sexologist Patricia Weerkoon, pastor Dr. Allan Meyer, teacher and counsellor Helen Meyer and family law professor Patrick Parkinson. All of the panel members not only carry authority within their chosen fields but also own a firm personal faith in Jesus.

With the skills of our in-house IT man (thanks Phil) and the 'loan' of the PYV web modem (thanks PYV), we sorted out some initial technical wobbles and from then onwards all went smoothly. A supper afterwards gave the attendees further opportunity to talk about the issues.

Thanks are particularly due to ACL for their proactive stance for Christian marriage and the uniting effect their efforts to uphold Christian moral and ethical values have on believers across the denominations, which is perhaps a phenomenon not seen within Australia for a long time.

I doubt if anyone went away from this webcast with-

out having become better informed to reason for Christ in the face of what is very much a nation-defining battle for the sanctity of the marriage covenant. If anyone was not able to attend, all is not lost. You can download the video, or purchase it on DVD. Just go to acl.org.au/marriage-webcast, or view it on the ACL site.

*Rev. Andrew Venn
Minister, Heathmont Presbyterian Church*

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Canterbury youth run holiday club for Skipton kids



Louise Goswell, a sixteen-year-old member of our team, said, 'It was incredible to see the kids so open and excited to hear about what we had to tell them. It was really encouraging for us all and I can't wait for next year!'

Outside of

Ken made a puzzle to help the children remember the memory verse.

Laughter, singing and shouting was all that could be heard from the Hall of the Skipton Presbyterian Church on Monday morning at 9am as our team geared up to begin our third annual Holiday Club. It was refreshing, after months of study, prayer, preparation and planning, to be finally on the ground, ready to see how God would use this opportunity. This year, the majority of our team was made up of teens from Canterbury Presbyterian Church, who had all put in weeks of hard work to be ready for the mission.

Our program this year focussed on introducing Jesus, using five of the 'I Am' sayings in the book of John. Each member of our team prepared a Bible story from the passage, and presented it using pictures, acting, powerpoints,

and even a live sheep! The team also prepared memory verses, songs, games and crafts all to help emphasise stories from the day.



The Canterbury Team after a great week with the Skipton Church.

We made damper when we learnt that Jesus is the bread of life, and we made candles when we learnt that Jesus is the light of the world.

our program, we were given many opportunities to contribute to the life of the congregation and the community. On Sunday morning we had thirty-five members from Canterbury come to the morning service at Skipton to encourage the Church and to launch the program. Tuesday night was a games night for teens from the community. 'This was my favourite night because I thought Skipton was a place with lots of old people,' said Enya Toyama, a thirteen-year-old team member. We were able to join the Bible study with the Church members and contribute by sharing our testimonies. We

also visited two hostels for the elderly, and sang for the residents.

'It was great to build relationships, not just with the kids there, but with the team as well,' observed Betty Lee. Taking teens on mission is a wonderful



FELLOW WORKERS

The indomitable man of vision

One century ago, the Rev John Flynn was appointed Superintendent of the newly formed Australian Inland Mission. This is the second of five articles, by the Rev. Robert Benn, continuing the story of the life and ministry of one of our own whose faith and service we must not forget.

Ormond College. Theological studies. Not easy for John Flynn! It's the typical tension, study verses ministry.

John was so involved with the Footscray boys, whom he saw as vagabond, that half his focus was Bible Class with them, and occupying their time on a boat in the Yarra. He believed that after four years the staff 'let down the slip rails' to let him through!

But it wasn't only the Footscray boys. Rev Donald Cameron, Director of Home Missions, really believed in Flynn's ability and passion to engage country men with the gospel of God's grace in Christ Jesus. He suggested shearers' missions during term vacation, an opportunity for ministry to which

John couldn't say no.

Remember that while rabbit shooting, he met Hugh V. McKay? Now on shearers' mission, he met Rev Andrew Barber of the Hamilton congregation. That meeting, as had been the situation with Hugh McKay, developed into a close and valuable friendship for the Presbyterian Church and the nation. Andrew supplied John with tracts to use with shearers. John studied them and responded, 'Andrew, the language of those tracts is not for country men. Definitely not!'

So, with his mind racing through all the experiences he had had with men, and all the stories he had heard, he began to think about producing a booklet that would be

profoundly useful for them. The first half was on the subject of first aid. Then came quotes from the greats, Bible readings concerning the character of God, his redemptive purpose, his compassionate dealings with mankind, the cross and resurrection, and our return to him by grace. Following this section was a selection of great hymns, psalms and prayers, and then very practical advice on making a will, postal services, a calendar and a ledger. This, thought John Flynn, would be right on track for the bush man, particularly since he had heard of the men of the bush losing a mate through accident, and when conducting

Continued overleaf

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and exciting experience. They have the opportunity to learn many new skills and enjoy experiences they may never get to try in their local church context. Everyone was pushed beyond their comfort zones and was able to contribute to real gospel ministry. We prayed together, studied Scripture together and served together! A fifteen-year-old returning team member, Kevin Yeon, said, 'It was exciting to come back to Skipton and run the holiday program again. I was encouraged to see the support the Skipton community gave the program we were running, and to see many kids from previous years, and also many new ones. I'm already looking forward to next year's trip!'

Joy Venning
Youth Worker
Canterbury Presbyterian Church

Presbyterian Inland Mission

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The indomitable man of vision

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the funeral only knowing to sing, *For he's a jolly good fellow* before taking the shovel and filling in the grave. *The Bushman's Companion* was the title of this booklet, and thousands were distributed while on shearers' missions and beyond.

Appointment time. John had pondered mission work in Korea, or regular parish ministry in Victoria. No. Jessie Litchfield, a wonderful Christian lady from Darwin, sent a letter to the editor of *The Messenger* (the Victoria Church's magazine). The Rev Donald Cameron passed on this letter to John Flynn. Jessie wrote about the 'fearful situation' at the Top

End caused by distance, drink, drugs and prostitution that, too often, resulted in hospitalization and death. 'We need men who will put Christ first, who will work for the good of others, and spare neither time nor money nor labour in the cause of Christ,' she wrote. Incidentally, Jessie slept with a loaded German revolver under her pillow! Life was rough.

This letter hit the mark for Flynn. Soon he was ordained in Adelaide as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and soon afterwards, he was on the train for Beltana and the Smith of Dunesk Mission. Like John Wesley, who thought, 'The world is my parish', John viewed Beltana to Darwin as being his parish. It was overwhelming for him to learn of the good

work done by his predecessors, Rev Frank Rolland, Rev Robert Mitchell and Rev EE Baldwin. He realised that his acceptance by the men and women of the bush was largely due to the tremendous respect they had for those who preceded him in the communication of the gospel, and the associated multi-faceted care.

Oodnadatta was his first port of call as he began to investigate the needs of his 'parish'. With his well-developed ability to yarn with country men, it wasn't too long before he began to hear stories of loneliness, fear and despair. At the same time, he witnessed the vast

“We need men who will put Christ first, who will work for the good of others, and spare neither time nor money nor labour in the cause of Christ,” Jessie Litchfield wrote.”

distances of inland Australia, the lack of ability to communicate and the terrible dearth of medical help.

'You

need a nursing home here!' said Flynn. 'But where does the finance come from? The expense. Just too much for us!' And Flynn, typically, quotes the Scriptures, 'faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'

Due to a very generous gift from an Adelaide friend, that hospital was in service within twelve months. It was opened by Rev Robert Mitchell with the words, 'In the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, the Great Healer and Redeemer of men, I trust that every person entering this medical home will go out cured of infirmity and blessed

in soul as well as body.' Then down came the rain, a rare occurrence. A blessing, and seal. The rainwater tanks were full.

Vision realised. Typical Flynn.

But the next step was huge. It drew the prayer, 'Great God, I'm ready to start now. Please help'. Then he uttered that which became a motto for him: 'For Christ and the continent'. So what was it that exercised his mind, heart and soul so radically?

He had been asked to survey the inland of the continent, and bring a report to the September 1912 General Assembly of the PCA on what the church needed to do to effectively minister to the people 'of the uttermost bush', to use a phrase of Flynn's. He had five months to deliver the report which 'profoundly influenced' the Assembly clerk. This report would bring strong commendation from the Moderator and excite standing ovation from the Assembly commissioners!

Rev. Robert Benn

New Elder for Heathmont PC

Heathmont Presbyterian Church rejoices in the fact that we have added to the number of our session. On Sunday 29th July 2012, Mr Brendan Alter was ordained and inducted into the elder-

ship of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

J.D. Fraser
Session Clerk

Heathmont Presbyterian Church

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