

The Real **Australian**

WINTER 2025

Calling you
to go the
distance

4

Farewelling
much loved
gospel workers

5

Would you
make a four-
hour round
trip to get to
Bible Study?

8

BCA Directory

**THE REAL AUSTRALIAN IS A REGISTERED
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Front Cover: Calling you to go the distance

Many towns – one purpose

Whenever I visit a country town, I find myself wondering – why is this town here? Often, there's a fascinating story behind it. Some towns sprang up around river crossings or railway lines, vital links in a vast landscape. Others became hubs for agriculture – sheep, wheat, citrus or cattle. Some towns exist because of gold rushes long past, or more recently, the mining of iron ore, copper or coal. Others were once rural areas that are fast becoming commuter communities for those seeking a 'tree change'.

Each town has its own unique story – a mix of history, geography, industry and change. Some have grown slowly over generations, while others have rapidly changed with new industries or shifting populations. But no matter what shaped these towns, or why they came into being, there's one thing that unites our work across them all: the Gospel.

BCA goes the distance to support bush ministry in towns for one reason: because every person in every town, no matter how large or small, and regardless of the reason for its existence, needs to hear the hope found in Jesus.

And we can only do this because of you. Your prayers, your partnership, and your generosity are what make gospel ministry possible in these places.

As we launch our mid-year appeal, I want to thank you. Thank you for being part of God's mission to rural, regional, and remote Australia.

Thank you for going the distance to share Jesus with the bush.



Greg Harris
National Director



Calling you to go the distance

Our 2025 mid-year appeal seeks your partnership to help our Field Staff go the distance to share Jesus with the bush.

You're invited to make a special investment to help seize opportunities to bring the Gospel to more of rural, regional and remote Australia.

Like me, I know you also believe it's urgent for people in the bush to hear the good news of Jesus.

Why? Because the Gospel changes lives!

You'll be standing with Field Staff all across the country as they serve their communities. Field Staff just like Simon & Angela Owen in outback Queensland.

As the Owens continue to build relationships in Cloncurry, they've started a women's Bible study group that brought an impressive response given the town's humble population...

"Eight women attended the first study, including two who drove over two hours(!) each way from stations outside of Julia Creek. They were

greatly encouraged... particularly as many living in remote places can feel very isolated in their faith."

There's no getting around it – Australians are hungry for the Gospel.

It's so important not only to start well but to continue well in the bush, and that requires significant resources which can be up to \$100,000 per location per year.

Imagine the transformative impact your special gift could have – helping achieve or even exceed this funding need so more lives can be changed by Christ's love.

God is opening doors for the Gospel to go forth across the nation. Thank you for faithfully equipping Field Staff like Simon & Angela to seize the moment and step through new doors to share the Gospel message.

To give to our mid-year appeal visit bushchurcaid.com.au/appeal



Simon & Angela
Owen

Farewelling much loved gospel workers

After over 18 years serving God with BCA, we farewell Indigenous Ministry Officer Neville Naden & his wife Kathie at the end of June.

The Naden family, including children Jamie, Jum & Jono, first joined the BCA family in 2006 when they were asked by the Church Army, the Uniting Church and BCA to set up a church plant in Broken Hill.

Neville & Kathie had established a similar church in Mount Druitt, Sydney, where they stayed for 10 years. When they were asked to move to Broken Hill, they felt that the church was at a point that it could continue without them. Today, the Mount Druitt Indigenous Church continues in partnership with Minchinbury Anglican Church and Mount Druitt Presbyterian Church.

The Living Desert Indigenous Church became a vital part of God's mission and ministry in Broken Hill. Like in Mount Druitt, Neville & Kathie stayed for 10 years. During their time there, they not only reached out to First Nations people, but welcomed many visitors including school groups, church groups, Dusty Boots trips and CFT tours. "For me, the

best part of being in Broken Hill was getting to know and love the people there," says Neville.

In 2008, Neville wrote in *The Real Australian*, "The importance of Indigenous ministry in the outback has been highlighted by the recent Census. The Aboriginal population in the Far West is on the increase, whilst the non-indigenous population is declining. Many of our people are moving back to their places of birth and are seeking to set up house and home in the area. The Far West Indigenous Church is uniquely positioned to provide opportunities for Aboriginal people to be trained for ministry."

continued page 6...



Mt Druitt ministry days



In early 2016 at the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship Convention in Port Augusta, former BCA National Director Mark Short approached Neville and asked whether he would consider working with Bush Church Aid on a full-time basis as its Indigenous Ministry Officer.

"In his time in this role, among many other things, Neville has cared pastorally for Indigenous Field Staff, supported our Field Staff when ministering to Indigenous people; championed the raising up of Indigenous ministers and mission workers; and travelled far and wide promoting the work of BCA and Indigenous ministry to churches across Australia," says current

National Director Greg Harris.

Neville & Kathie developed Cultural Awareness Training aimed to assist ministers, clergy and other mission workers in ministering to and alongside Indigenous peoples. They brought their personal insights and experiences, as well as valuable knowledge and skills into these training sessions. This training was rolled out to all BCA Field Staff as well as other organisations and theological colleges across Australia.

"I suppose the highlight for me in my time as Indigenous Ministry Officer is BCA taking Indigenous ministry seriously," says Neville. "BCA has always had a desire to minister in the Indigenous space, but it was





FAR LEFT:
Neville preaching
at Living Desert in
Broken Hill

TOP RIGHT:
The Naden family

BOTTOM RIGHT:
Reconciliation Action
Plan painting by
Melissa Lilley

originally non-Indigenous people taking the Gospel to Indigenous people. But now First Nations people have been trained up and empowered to take the Gospel to our people themselves. There's nothing that would please me more than to see that this continues to develop, and BCA is heading the charge on those things.

"Other highlights for me have been the establishment of the Indigenous Student Bursary, the Chaplaincy program at Nungalinya College, and the bringing on board of First Nations Ministry Training. We also mentored George Ferguson during his ministry training in South Tamworth. Now he's serving his people in Walgett and Collarenebri. Jack Harradine continued my work in Broken Hill and now works as an itinerant minister amongst our people in South Australia."


Another of Neville's key accomplishments was BCA's Acknowledgement of Country and Reconciliation Action Plan. Working with Indigenous

advisors, these documents were prayerfully and carefully crafted. Today they are a key part of BCA's commitment to Indigenous Ministry. The Acknowledgement of Country has a special place in many hearts as a Biblically sound and meaningful declaration of God's sovereignty and lordship. It is used by many organisations apart from BCA. You can read this Acknowledgment of Country on our website bushchurchaid.com.au/indigenouresources

So where to now for the Nadens? "Kathie and I will be trying our hand at retirement for a season," Neville says. "If it doesn't quite suit us, we may look at transitioning into a role that supports the work of the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship.

"For now my plan is to support struggling Indigenous churches. I also hope to continue to provide support for BCA's Indigenous ministry program. BCA does a wonderful job in the Indigenous space."

Janine van den Tillaart



Would you make a four-hour round trip to get to Bible Study?

If you live in the city, you would probably never have considered making a four-hour round trip to get to Bible Study, and nor would you ever likely need to.

And yet this is the reality for many in the outback. In fact 'going the distance' is such a normal part of life for those living in rural parts of Australia, whether it is accessing shops, medical services or getting a simple car maintenance. It's therefore no surprise that finding Christian fellowship also requires the same level of commitment.

Last August, off the back of a women's morning tea event we hosted a few weeks prior, I started a monthly women's Bible Study group in Cloncurry with a small group of women – two of whom travelled two hours to make it from properties outside Julia Creek (our smaller neighbouring town 150km away).

22-year-old Breanna was one of these women. Originally from Townsville, she was working on a cattle station

one hour from Julia Creek when she connected with us through the monthly Julia Creek church service we started in 2023. Feeling quite isolated from family, friends and Christian fellowship for the first time in her life, she said the four-hour round trip to Cloncurry was "very worth it" to meet and study the Bible with other like-minded women.

While Breanna has since moved back to Townsville, she recently shared with me: "Being without my family was extremely hard for me but these trips to Cloncurry left my heart lighter and reminded me that I was not alone, and these women ultimately pointed me to Jesus and the way He was always with me."

Another regular member of our group who travels the distance is Jen, a mother of three who has owned



FAR LEFT:
On the road
between Cloncurry
and Julia Creek

TOP RIGHT:
Angela with some of
the Bible study ladies

BOTTOM RIGHT:
The women's
morning tea event
from which the
Bible study grew

a cattle station near Julia Creek with her husband for the past 15 years. With a lifetime of rural living, Jen loves the land and being in wide open spaces. And yet she acknowledges that Christian fellowship has been hard to find and has drawn much encouragement from the fellowship and teaching at our monthly Bible study and monthly church service.

"Even if I could go to one Bible study a year it would be worth the effort," said Jen.

"Learning from others encourages me to read and study my Bible and know it better, and meeting and praying with others has also helped me feel supported which has built up my faith."

Some women in the group have never experienced being part of a Bible study group before. Ele, a mother of three who owns and manages a cattle business from Cloncurry, was delighted to be invited to the group and has

found it "a safe and inspiring space to ask questions and even get off track occasionally following the thoughts and questions that spin off from the study."

"It's a nice social group of Christian women which I've never found before," said Ele.

Over the past nine months we've enjoyed studying various interactions Jesus had with women in the gospels, inspired by Rebecca McLaughlin's book *Jesus through the eyes of women*.

Whether we've had two, four or eight of us, we've had a fruitful time of delving deeper into God's Word and discovering more about His Son.

Please join me in thanking God for this group of women and please pray for our monthly Bible study group to continue being a source of encouragement for women seeking God's Word in Cloncurry and Julia Creek.

Angela Owen



Reaching Carnarvon with the Good News of Jesus

In our end of year appeal in 2024 we sought your help to support seven new communities across Australia. Carnarvon in Western Australia was one such community and Mike & Emma Welham have hit the ground running since moving there in March this year. Here Mike tells us more:

Our Commencement Service went really well, with visitors from Geraldton and Carnarvon filling the church to officially mark our start here. It was special to have Lachlan Edwards (Dean of Geraldton Cathedral) with us to lead the service. I was a student minister under Lachlan and he said that the service was like a *graduation* for me – a proud moment for him as my trainer. Another special detail is that Lachlan was a student minister to Ray Arthur who was there on behalf of BCA National Director Greg Harris. We had a photo taken of Ray, Lachlan and myself, marking the generational ‘passing of the baton’ in ministry from Ray to Lachlan to me (see top right).

Pastors from each church in Carnarvon attended the service,

which was very encouraging. I have met with most of them privately and am enjoying getting to know my co-labourers in the Lord and how we can work together for the cause of Christ here. We had an opportunity to do ‘Stations of the Cross’ at Easter, and the churches unite to put on a Carols event in December. There is also discussion about combined prayer events to bring the body of Christ together here.

There were some newcomers from Carnarvon, who had not been to church in some time, who were glad to be part of this occasion. We have also had a few new people join our church after being away for some time, which is a great encouragement.

Emma’s connection to the community as a chaplain has been



FAR LEFT:
Carnarvon, WA

TOP RIGHT:
Ray Arthur,
Mike Welham &
Lachlan Edwards

BOTTOM RIGHT:
Clergy from the
Diocese of North West
Australia, and also
local pastors from
the Church of Christ,
Uniting Church and
Catholic Church

swiftly put to good use. She was asked to speak at a Carnarvon Community women's event about her chaplaincy, which she very much enjoyed. She is making good headway with staff and students at the school as well. Emma's role would not have been possible without the support of BCA in bringing us to Carnarvon.

Now and into the future

For now, I am focusing on getting the essential elements of ministry established. These include Bible teaching on Sundays, two new Bible study groups, pastoral care/visits, building the electronic presentations for our weekly services, plus a ton of admin!

After establishing new Bible study groups, my aim is to do some evangelism training to help build the confidence of our church members to reach out to people in the community they already have connections with. The goal is for each person to articulate the Gospel and share their personal testimony about how Jesus changed their lives

– and pluck up the courage to tell people about Jesus with these skills!

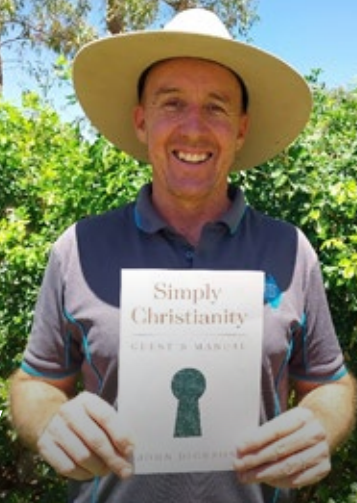
I am hoping that in and through me, God would mature and grow His church here in Carnarvon, lost sinners would find salvation in Christ alone, and that we would be intentional about connecting with the lost and the broken in Carnarvon (there are a lot of social issues here). The hard part is that we can't do everything at once, and I need to pace myself as my role is four days a week. I am praying for God's guidance and wisdom as we establish the ministry of the Gospel in our patch here.

Emma continues to work on deepening her connections with staff and students at the school, and we pray that people would be pointed to the love of Christ as she works in this vital role.

Please pray with us as we near six months here in Carnarvon. May many find the hope that we share in our risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Mike Welham

Simply Christianity



Coming into 2025 Frank Nicol asked a few people if they would like to investigate Christianity more closely. The answer was an overwhelming yes, and eight people joined Frank for a course called *Simply Christianity*, a course that he did 25 years before. Frank tells us more:

My start with *Simply Christianity* was back in the year 2000 when I was at university. I wasn't a Christian and I didn't really want anything to do with Christianity. One day I came into a chemistry lecture late and took the last seat next to Jo (whom I didn't know at the time). Jo challenged me and got me going to the Christian group on campus. Because you're in a Christian group people just assume you are a Christian. So, they wanted help to run *Simply Christianity* in the student village on campus where I lived. I just thought they wanted

money. I had a chunk of cash in my back pocket, so I was like 'yeah, I can support'. They said 'no', we mean get involved practically – going out to buy ice cream to woo students to come to the course. I ended up doing the course and by the end of it I was convicted that Jesus rose from the dead. And that was the start of my Christian journey. I was converted at age 17.

Running the course at Karratha Anglican flowed out of a change in our church last year. We had 20 key





FAR LEFT:
Frank with his *Simply Christianity* book

TOP RIGHT:
Frank, Jo & the kids

BOTTOM RIGHT:
Karratha Anglican Church sign

church members leave. They were all replaced, but with people who were not mature Christians. And that's when I seized the opportunity to run *Simply Christianity*.

Simply Christianity is simple – it's a nice short five-week course, where there is an expectation that you read a chunk of the Gospel of Luke each week. And when you get back together, the course points out some simple things to notice about who Jesus is as King and rescuer, what the cross has to do with everything, and how to understand the resurrection.

It's written by John Dickson and effectively there's only five points:

- Christianity is about responding appropriately to Jesus.
- As the Christ, Jesus possessed the authority of God.
- Jesus came on a rescue mission to save people who had distanced themselves from God.
- The cross is where the rescue mission is achieved.
- The resurrection declares Jesus to be Lord and Saviour.

We ran the course over Term 1. There are no flashy videos, even though I'm

not against flashy videos as such, but if you want to get to know Jesus you have to read the Bible, there's no way around that.

Each week those participating read some of Luke at home, listened to a little bit of content from me, and then asked me whatever they wanted.

The great thing about *Simply Christianity* is that it really engages you with the Gospel of Luke and when people missed sessions, they were keen to catch up. So while most of the sessions were done as a group, I caught up with everybody individually and that meant I got a range of different questions.

And the highlights of the course?

One of the girls who has a Japanese background wants to get baptised. One of the men whom we've known for five years and had come along to church previously, said at the end of the course, "I'm on board, Jesus is my Lord and Saviour". A number of people have said that they are interested in studying Acts as a follow-up. I need a book just like *Simply Christianity*, I might contact John Dickson.

Frank Nicol

Touring with CFT

Connect with like-minded people and meet
BCA Field Staff on a wonderful Australian
holiday full of fun, faith & fellowship



Tasmanian Touring

14 days – Departs 4 November 2025

Experience the wonder of God's creation on an in-depth tour of beautiful Tassie – enjoy pristine environments, heritage towns, historic sites, cruises, steam train, beautiful gardens and fresh produce. Connect with local Christians & share worship with BCA's Josh & Naomi Skeat (Tasmanian Regional Officer – Ulverstone) and Dave & Lauren Horne (Southern Beaches). A truly memorable tour shared with like-minded people with a Christian tour leader and daily devotions. Fare includes flights (from Sydney & Melbourne), quality accommodation, all sightseeing and attractions, most meals, all transport and transfers.



Holidays with BCA Connection in 2026

In 2026 we will have lots of different BCA holidays including – Norfolk Island / Salt & Light (Sydney to Alice Springs or Darwin) / NWA x 3 options (Darwin – Broome – Perth) / Kangaroo Island & Adelaide. To find out more visit our website.



Book online christianfellowshiptours.com
or call 1300 635 358

CODED WORDS FOR JOSHUA – THE NEW LEADER

Each number stands for a letter of the alphabet. Write the correct letter in the blank to find the coded words and phrase.

12 1 14 4

15 2 5 25

12 5 1 4 5 18

10 15 18 4 1 14

16 18 15 19 16 5 18

CODE KEY

A 1	K 11	U 21
B 2	L 12	V 22
C 3	M 13	W 23
D 4	N 14	X 24
E 5	O 15	Y 25
F 6	P 16	Z 26
G 7	Q 17	
H 8	R 18	
I 9	S 19	
J 10	T 20	

GOD TOLD JOSHUA,

"

2 5 19 20 18 15 14 7 1 14 4

"

3 15 21 18 1 7 5 15 21 19 .



Cosy Winter Warmer Soup

This recipe is one you will definitely need an adult to help you with, so be sure to ask a parent for this cook up, and if you intend on gifting it to another family.

I learned this recipe from someone in my family and have made it for years on those cold windy nights, to create a cosy, warm, healthy dinner. I have also made it as a gift for others when they have just come home from hospital with a baby or just need some extra kindness in their day. It is super nutritious filled with veggies and is so easy to freeze and reheat.

For additional cosy points you can even make this in the slow cooker, so the delicious smell fills the house all day.

Ingredients

- 500g meat ideal for slow cooking. This is up to you but could be chuck steak, lamb etc
- 2 parsnips grated
- 2 swedes grated
- 2 onions diced
- 4 cloves garlic crushed
- 4 litres of beef stock (if the soup gets too thick when cooking you can add a little more stock or water as needed)
- 2 carrots grated
- 2 sticks of celery cut
- 500g soup mix
- 1 tbsp Vegemite (Yes you read that correctly, one of my favourite things to add)
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce (Can you say this word?)
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper

You could also add a can of tinned tomatoes if you like your soup to have a tomato flavour, you can also add fresh herbs like thyme if you want a bit more flavour. I tend to want this soup plain but have made it also with these ingredients and it is just as delicious.

Perhaps there is someone in your church community who has just had a baby, or perhaps your family knows someone who could just use a bit extra kindness at the moment. Talk to your parents beforehand to discuss if you could give the soup to someone as an act of kindness.

Rachel Dirks

Method

- Pre-soak your soup mix according to packet instructions. If I am making the soup in the afternoon, I do this in the morning, if I am making it in the slow cooker I do it overnight.

IN A LARGE SOUP POT:

- Fry onion and garlic in olive oil until translucent.
- Add meat and fry until browned.
- If you are making this in the slow cooker you can now add this to the slow cooker pot, add all other ingredients (except for celery) and cook according to your machine settings. On mine I normally simmer for 6–8 hours on low. Add celery about an hour before cooking is done.
- If you are making on the stove add all other ingredients (except for celery) to the pot and simmer for two hours. Add celery about half an hour before cooking is done.
- Serve with fresh bread and butter and enjoy your cosy winter warmer soup.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Josephine L	Rachael F
Obadiah S	Genevieve Mc
Mitchell B	Brayden D
Franklin P	William S
Jacob H	Sarah D
Isaac H	Lorelei W
Jack J	Savannah G
Eleanor Mc	Lane M
Phoebe G	Kayleigh G
Clancy O	Jerakye G
Audrey D	Joel L
Henry N	Maximilian M
Ted M	Ethan B
Mayella B	Esther O
Isla N	Roger C
Olive S	Edward S
Ruby L	Lilly M
Philippa S	Sarah H
Annabelle P	Josiah C
Brook W	Matthew P
Skye W	Ellia A



I WANT TO BE A MEMBER OF



If you are in pre-school or primary school and would like to join BCA 4 Kids, ask your parents to fill out the form below and return to:

BCA 4 KIDS
GPO Box 5389
Sydney NSW 2001

OR

Email your info to:
BCA4Kids@bushchurchaid.com.au

Every member receives a welcome letter,
 a welcome certificate, a drink bottle and
 a copy of our BCA 4 Kids magazine!



Name _____

Parent/Caregiver _____

Age _____ Birthday _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Boy or Girl _____

What church do you go to? _____



BCA MONEY BOXES

Kids give great support to BCA, and every dollar you put in the box is a dollar which goes to help tell people about Jesus. Thanks to our wonderful young supporters!



Around the country



KARRATHA, WA:
Pilbara Field Staff **Simon Roberts**, **Roger Kyngdon** and **Frank Nicol** caught up in February – they're pictured spelling out the letters BCA!



MUDGE, NSW:
Nearly 100 people attended the annual Nomads Gathering held in March. It was a time of fellowship, mutual encouragement and shared experiences.



BRISBANE, QLD:
Richard Gibson from the Brisbane School of Theology gave the Bible talk at the BCA Connect event at St Philip's Rochedale. He's pictured with **Mike Uptin**.



SYDNEY, NSW:
BCA Connect gatherings were held in late March. Over 180 attended the four events and heard from **Brendan Hurley** about life and ministry in Broken Hill.



WALLAROO, SA:
BCA supporter **Pam Shipard** grew up on a property on the Eyre Peninsular in the 1940s. She remembers 'the BCA man' (Leon Morris) who would visit in his green van. As Pam grew up, she took on her own faith and been a BCA supporter ever since.



BENDIGO, VIC:
This is **Edwina & John Bleakley** together with **Jill & Tim Buttle** who together produce and sell calendars for BCA each year.



TOONGABBIE, NSW:
BCA Sunday at Toongabbie Anglican saw **Neville Naden** preaching and **Paul Sampson** and **Josiah Elsley** talking about BCA. They're pictured with Senior Minister **Mike Hastie**.

BCA supports 10 Bursary Students in 2025

When BCA reinstituted its Theological Bursary in 2022, we were excited to identify and support students to be suitably trained gospel workers committed to serving in a country location.

This year it was with great joy we announced that Malachi Walker, one of last year's theological bursary students, embarked on full-time ministry in the bush. Malachi completed his Master of Divinity at Trinity Theological College in Perth and returned to the church he first attended, was discipled in the faith, baptised, and served as a Youth Group and Bible Study leader – the Geraldton Anglican Cathedral.



"Transitioning from theological study to vocational ministry is both incredibly exciting and terrifying," says Malachi. "So, what a wonderful thing it is that I get to do both with the support of BCA!"

BCA has always had a passion to support students who have a heart for ministering in rural, regional, and remote Australia. And this year we are supporting 10 theological students (both Indigenous and non-indigenous) with a bursary.

This year's 10 students include four returning students: **Terrence, Samuel, Riley & Callum** and six brand new students: **Grace, Sharon, Dale, Nich, Cam & Matt**.



Grace is in her second year of a Bachelor of Theology at Brisbane School of Theology (BST). "This Bursary is life changing. To be able to use this bursary to pay off some of my student loans and relieve some current financial demands means more to me than I can express with words."

Sharon, who is studying a Master of Divinity at BST, is passionate about evangelism. "At college, I run monthly seminars on 'Bible Storytelling' a strategy for evangelism and discipleship settings. I learned this strategy from Christine Dillon at SMBC and am now passing it on at BST."





Dale, like Sharon is also doing a Master of Divinity at BST. Not only is he keen to return to serve in the bush, he and his wife have bought a property in Batchelor (NT). "We love it out there, we love the people, the climate, the plants, animals and country. We are committed to going wherever God leads us, but currently we believe that's somewhere in the Top End."

Matt is studying a Master of Divinity at Ridley College. "I'd like to think at the end of my life I could say that whether I was serving in a congregation of 10 people, or 1000 people – that the numbers didn't affect my faithfulness and dedication to serve God and His people."



Cam is a third-year student at Trinity Theological College in Perth and is married with three young daughters. "Apart from growing up in the country, spending most of my life in Albany, my wife and I are eager to serve God where He wants us, including the country."

Nich is studying at Moore College having previously studied at YouthWorks and is completing a MTS apprenticeship. "I grew up in Dubbo and although I moved to Sydney to study, it was always my plan to move back to the country, resourcing less resourced areas."



In the next issue of *The Real Australian*, you'll hear more about Callum who this year moved to Lightning Ridge to work alongside our very own Kurt & Bec Langmead.

Janine van den Tillaart



A blessed week of mission

As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. Psalm 42:1 ESV

Each year, Moore College sends teams of students, faculty and chaplains to partner with churches in Sydney, Australia, and overseas, to run missions that proclaim Jesus.

In late March, an eager group of 15 students sat in a loungeroom in Newtown preparing for a week of mission with God's people on the east coast of Tasmania. As they read and meditated on the longing for God that is expressed in Psalm 42, they were unaware that from their first day connecting with the communities of Dodges Ferry, Sorell and Triabunna, they would witness a strong thirst for God's salvation among these small rural communities.

Working alongside Dave & Lauren Horne at Southern Beaches Anglican, as well as the sister churches at Sorell and Triabunna, the team had the privilege of meeting other brothers and sisters in Christ and getting alongside them as they sought to share the Gospel in their communities.

The student team immersed

themselves in the week's activities – from preaching on Sundays, assisting with Kids' Church and Kids' Club, to inviting the local community along to the Easter Monday outreach service in a park. What was clear to the students from day one, was that God was powerfully at work in and through His people in Dodges Ferry, and they were the blessed recipients of the fruit of His work as the week progressed.

As the team participated in their first Sunday service, giving testimonies and assisting with Kids' Church, a young girl, visiting on an invitation from a family friend, asked second-year student Leo how she could be part of God's family and share in God's blessings. Leo was able to pray with her and that day she gave her life to the Lord!

This was the first of many demonstrations of God's work through His people at Dodges Ferry which were witnessed by the students.

Later in the week as the team met in the church office, which is centrally



FAR LEFT:
Dave with the team

TOP RIGHT:
Kids' Club – biggest numbers all year

BOTTOM RIGHT:
Kids' Club leaders

located above the two most popular cafes in the town (and within view of the coast!), there was a knock on the door. A first-time enquirer was interested to know more about the church and how he could connect with their community! Praise God!

What might seem like a small event was a consequence of some intentional decision-making by Dave & Lauren as they connected to the community they were seeking to reach with God's good news of Jesus. Locating their office in the most popular part of town and establishing links with groups such as Christian Surfers, are decisions which have people's salvation at heart.

"It was such a joy to meet Dave & Lauren," shared College student Jonny, "Dave is focused on the Bible, and he has a clear vision for the church which is both theologically sound and relational. I was convicted by Dave's vision to train and teach the Bible well as a foundation for establishing real relationships which result in genuine community."

Lisa, a second-year College student, shared, "There is a real intentionality in how, under Dave's leadership, the Southern Beaches Church reaches out

into the community. The town is growing and changing in its makeup, developing into a family beachside town."

With an eye on this blossoming local population, and a focus on HOPE25, the student team, with the leadership and guidance of College Faculty member Mark Earngey and Chaplain Isobel Linn, were able to share their faith and experience of God's goodness with the church family at Dodges Ferry.

"Dave was keen for each of us to share our testimonies with his congregation as a way of encouraging them and spurring them on in their own walk with the Lord," explained Lisa. "The prayer and praise night was a highlight of the week as the church community came together to pray for opportunities to minister within their community."

Can you join with us as we continue to pray for the equipping of God's people in understanding, skills and confidence to share Jesus with their friends in Dodges Ferry?

Heidi Combs
Communications Manager,
Moore College



Coober Pedy is a weird place!

A small team of Evangelical Students (ES) from North Terrace in Adelaide travelled to Coober Pedy after our recent National Training Event (NTE). Blake captured the team's initial impressions well: "Coober Pedy is a weird place!".

We heard from a member of the local historical society that a mission team from Adelaide Uni and the Teachers' college visited Coober Pedy in 1961. There may have been other teams who visited between then and now, but it's certainly the first time in a long time that an ES team has visited this iconic outback town.

Besides the unique experience of living underground in a dugout, Coober Pedy brings lots of different worlds together: the Aboriginal community, tourists, miners, various transient workers and other locals.

Dave & Margie have been pastoring the church there for around a year and we really noticed how God is using their skills in forming

relationships and connecting into community life. God has answered prayer recently for engagement with the local school. Flowing from this, the team enjoyed a 'casual' indoor soccer match with local kids. Michael in particular saw this as a highlight and hopes it leaves a positive memory for these kids.

One interesting aspect of ministry in Coober Pedy was the interactions with tourists. The church is one of four in town who are on the 'tourist circuit' – the church stays open and people can just drop in and take a look. Many of these tourists were happy to talk to the team giving a really natural way to share the Gospel. Hae-Yun reflected on one



FAR LEFT:
Coober Pedy's
Catacomb Church
is part of the
tourist circuit

TOP RIGHT:
EV students who
visited Coober Pedy

BOTTOM RIGHT:
Leading the
Sunday service

of these conversations "I felt very challenged with Kylie and all her big ideas. I was excited about her hunger and the chance to share parts of the Bible and faith with her. I also found it uncomfortable at times and it's made me think about how to share my faith with people who have a really different personality to me."

Part of Dave & Margie desire for the church is that it will serve the community in practical ways. And so they put the team to work cleaning up large amounts of rubbish after a Christmas party at the Umoona Aboriginal Community. Erica loved the opportunity to do something so simple but practical: "I enjoyed getting to practically support people. Loving them in this way alongside some of the other workers there has allowed us to learn more about their culture and improve our awareness of local Aboriginal communities." We also helped one of the locals with some moving and joined Dave &

Margie in their regular involvement with Park Run and the tennis club.

The team also had the chance to run the Sunday service where Elijah preached from Genesis 9 (the Noah story). The town had recently experienced unusually heavy rain so talk of rainbows and God's gracious provision was very timely!

As we left, James shared that he "now has a huge appreciation for country ministry and how much it can benefit the entire community – even those not engaged in church."

Thank you very much to the Catacomb Church in Coober Pedy for welcoming our team and inviting us into the many ways they are engaging with their community and the tourists who come through town. Thanks also to BCA for their assistance in making this trip possible!

Reuben Salazaras

AFES SA/NT Regional Team Leader



From the Archives

I came, I saw... and found it tough

"The next hottest place to Hell . . . too hot and dusty to live." Such were the comments when two people heard that I was facing a personal and imminent call to the new mining town of Paraburdoo in the Diocese of North West Australia.

These were not the first things I'd heard about this rugged and unfamiliar part of the continent for I had seen and heard the narrated pictorials of several BCA deputationists who came with first-hand experience of the area.

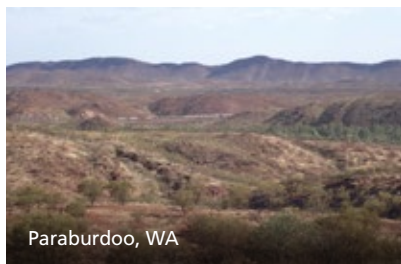
Perhaps it was the introduction in the little book, *Howell's Handy Hints* given me by Bishop Howell Witt that swayed me more than anything else to take the plunge and enter on such a ministry. The introduction made it quite apparent that in the North West the only ones who didn't come to make a quick 'buck' were the clergy and that much of their problem stemmed from isolation and loneliness in spirit as well as state. Such timely warnings, however,

were rounded off with a confident assertion that the area really wasn't Satan's total domain – God rules in North West Australia.

I 'plunged' for what now seems little short of half a lifetime, although it has covered the space of just four years. To adapt a well known phrase, "I came, I saw, . . . I found it tough." Found it tough psychologically because in a company town all its citizens tend to lean to the company for all their needs. The clergyman who depends on this affluent benefactor for his water, electricity and general maintenance, has to walk the tightrope between prudence and integrity in the face of unchristian practice or decree.

It's also tough physically. What city clergyman will accept a parish of three centres with a church, say in Sydney, one in Gosford and one in Maitland? A pastoral circuit of the outlying cattle stations involves a trip of a thousand kilometres.

It's tough spiritually. The numbers of Anglican lay folk who care for Bible Study or prayer could be numbered



Paraburdoo, WA



TOP LEFT:
Landscape around
Paraburdoo, WA

BOTTOM LEFT:
Reg Clark with
a 'friend'

on less than two hands. The number of worshipping families is little better, despite the fact that most of them desire the fringe benefits of a local ministry such as Baptisms, employment references, etc.

So why not leave them to their own devices? If to all intents and purposes it appears that the vitals of the Christian ministry as a whole seem not to be wanted, nor that they would be missed if suddenly withdrawn, why stay? Some real-life illustrations may help to answer the question.

I think of Tom, a senior company officer who until last December was in the grips of an alcohol habit. Reaching his all time 'low' he sought pastoral counsel and found Christ. He's been 'dry' for eleven months now. He seeks to help others in a similar situation as he sorts out the tangles of his past life.

Then there's Terry, a lad who initially drew my attention at the first school holiday camp we conducted. He was showing selected pages of The Little Red Schoolbook to some naive

young girls.

His mother was living in the town but not with his father.

Mum and Dad are now back together,

Terry has been confirmed and is being persecuted because he won't look at the pornographic literature being thrust at him by workmates. Terry says he'd sooner read his Bible.

There are other stories that could be told. Enough to say that I've found that Jesus' promise about the inheritance of houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and lands in the 'here and now' (Mark 10 verses 29–30) awaits only the obedience of His servants to the call of outback ministry for their fulfilment.

The Revd Reg Clark
Paraburdoo 1971–1975



This excerpt was taken from the December 1975 edition of The Real Australian. All past issues of The Real Australian can be found on our website: bushchurchoaid.com.au/archive

Post & Rails

WELCOME



Esther George commenced work as the admin assistant in the SA/NT Regional Office earlier this year. Esther is married to Jack, and they have two daughters Ella and Kezia. Last year Esther graduated from the Bible College of South Australia with a Graduate Diploma in Divinity. The family worship at Trinity Church Campbelltown.



Sarah McKinnon is the new admin assistant in the QLD/NNSW Regional Office. Some of you might recognise Sarah, an ex-BCA kid – the daughter of former Field Staff Peter & Joy Palmer. Sarah is married to Abe, and they have two sons, Hugo and Reggie. The worship at St Andrew's Springfield where Sarah is involved in the hospitality team.

FAREWELL



Neville Naden retires from his position as Indigenous Ministry Officer in June. Neville has been with BCA for over 18 years, first working with Kathie as Field Staff establishing the Living Desert Indigenous Church in Broken Hill before taking on the role of Indigenous Ministry Officer.



Jen Hercott has concluded her time as the Registrar for the Diocese of Central Queensland. Jen, Colin and Lachie have returned to Tasmania, where Jen first entered full-time ministry. Jen will commence in the role of Senior Minister at Burnie Anglican Church on 4 June.

CONGRATULATIONS



Malachi Walker was awarded The Mike Horgan Community Service Prize from Trinity Theological College. The prize is awarded to the student recognised by the college community as having made the most significant contribution to college life through their service.

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