

# northpoint

NORTH NSW CONFERENCE NEWS



AUG  
2013

View from Heaton Gap



## Youth Ministries Department takes Challenge to STORM Co teams

For nine days (1 to 9 July) during the recent school holidays, the North New South Wales (NNSW) Conference's Youth Ministries Department took a group out to visit STORM Co teams with the Pinnacle Challenge. There were STORM Co teams in Coonamble, Toomelah, Brewarrina, Goodooga, Lightning Ridge, Bourke, Walgett, Cobar, Wee Waa and Fiji (although the Pinnacle team didn't visit that one). With an average of 20 young people per STORM Co group, the 10 teams were mostly from churches, with three school groups rounding out the numbers.



The Pinnacle team clocked up close to 3000 kilometres on the trip, visiting seven of the groups and running half-day sessions with them. Pastor Jeff Parker, Youth Ministries Director for the NNSW Conference, says, "It was flat-out the whole time, but the kids loved it and it was a real attractor."

The STORM Co teams helped in the towns they visited through various acts of community service, including backyard blitzes, rubbish collections and running Vacation Bible Schools/Kids' Clubs — many of these things were done at the request of the local communities. In Bourke, the STORM Co group worked with the PCYC to help staff their holiday program. At Lightning Ridge, they helped at the youth centre. In Walgett, they assisted with celebrations for NAIDOC Week.



One of the highlights for the Pinnacle team was the Sabbath morning worship at Lightning Ridge, which was run by the STORM Co team from Avondale Memorial Church. Rick Hergenhan, Associate Youth Ministries Director, says, "We heard some good testimonies at the start of church from Beulah James, the local Bible worker. She was already getting positive feedback and had people knocking on her door, thanking her for the STORM Co team."

Another highlight was that the smallest STORM Co team (Goodooga) had the largest number of kids turning out each day. Susan Manson, Secretary for the Youth Ministries Department, says, "Not only were they with the kids mornings and afternoons, they also returned to the youth centre each evening. One evening they had a boys' and girls' night. The boys went to the bore baths and the girls had a pampering night."



The STORM Co teams are always well-received in the communities they visit. Rick says, "I think the most positive thing is seeing the youth doing things and getting out in the community. It's their initiative — they drive it; we support it. For example, the youth officer for the Walgett Shire Council chases us every year to work with the STORM Co team who'll visit. There's been a lot of goodwill and friendship built up."

Pastor Parker adds, "It's real seed-planting evangelism. It's not reaping, it's not a Daniel seminar — it's the grass-roots stuff. The towns are impacted tremendously by the work our young people do."

—Adele Nash

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# OUR CONFERENCE

## From the President: Changing paradigms in 2014



The General Conference has designated 2014 as the Year of Evangelism, and in the North New South Wales Conference, we are excited about this focus. We have decided to use this focus not only to reach our communities, but also to permanently shift our culture closer to where we believe God wants the church to operate.

The four principles that will guide our Year of Evangelism are as follows:

**1. Spiritual revival:** This must precede everything that we do! It is as we humble ourselves and pray that God will fill our lives with the Spirit. Every great work of God has been characterised by a deep repentance from sin and dependence on the righteousness of His Son Jesus Christ.

**2. Deeper biblical relationships:** We want our outreach approach to be far more relational than it has been in the past. We know that many of our members walk their spiritual journey quite apart from other members of the church. We need to develop a true biblical community where love and fellowship once again characterise the church.

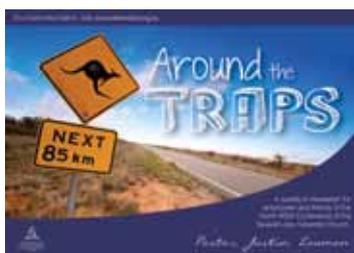
**3. The pastor as equipper, trainer and supporter of those doing ministry:** We have become so dependent on the paid elders/pastors undertaking all of the ministry that it has crippled the church. In the New Testament, the entire team of elders led the church, and every member was gifted by the Holy Spirit to build up the church with his or her own ministry. It is a lie of the Dark Ages that only the paid leaders can do ministry. Your baptism is your call to some form of ministry that the Holy Spirit has chosen for you.

**4. Lay-led outreach:** We would love to invest in the lives of our members as we approach the Year of the Evangelism so that we all feel confident we can play a part in this great work. Rather than just expecting the paid pastor to lead out in 2014, we would love to see teams of dedicated members leading the outreach. We hope this will become a permanent part of how we function as a church.

Keep watching this space as we explain more fully how you can have a part in this exciting time where we see the church return to its New Testament roots.

— Pastor Justin Lawman

Around The Traps, a weekly e-newsletter from Pastor Justin Lawman, is now available. It features a devotional and news from around the conference. To subscribe, send an email to [northpoint@adventist.org.au](mailto:northpoint@adventist.org.au) with "E-newsletter subscription" in the subject line.



## General Secretary's report

When considering what to share with the North New South Wales Conference church members, there is a temptation to focus on the "big stuff" — how many new churches have been planted? How many new loan applications have been approved? How many baptisms have there been? What are the plans for the Year of Evangelism in 2014?

All of that stuff is important.

But as I look back over the past six months, two things stick out in my mind as more important, and they both relate to investments in people.



On 18 May, the ARISE lay training program held the graduation for its inaugural class in Australia. It was a powerful event! More than 20 mostly young people received recognition for their three-month commitment to a "total immersion" evangelism training school. Laughter was shared, tears were shed, lives were transformed and Jesus was clearly seen in the lives of those graduates.

People from the community that were just taking tentative steps in the church were drawn to the Christ-like witness of the students and attended the graduation to support those that had facilitated the Holy Spirit's work in their life. Attending something like that makes the endless committee-sitting, minute-taking administrivia all worthwhile.

The other thing that sticks out is what I do each Thursday night. It's not on my job description, but I would enjoy my job less if I didn't do it. The local pastor has been kind enough to give me a *Beyond* DVD contact that came from some TV advertising that screened earlier in the year. So each Thursday night, I turn up at the lady's house, we exchange pleasantries, I ask her how she enjoyed the last DVD and give her the next one. The contact is brief, the task is simple. But the Holy Spirit has one more opportunity to impact a life for Christ.

The ARISE school is an investment in people. My 15-minute detour to a lady's house to drop off a DVD is an investment in a person. I can't measure the impact of these things. Some ARISE graduates may just be thankful for the experience and move on in life. My DVD contact may not be baptised soon. But is the investment in each of those people wasted?

I've been recently moved by the following quote: "If we were left to ourselves with the task of taking the gospel to the world, we would immediately begin planning innovative strategies and plotting elaborate schemes. We would organize conventions, develop programs, and create foundations . . . But Jesus is so different from us. With the task of taking the gospel to the world, he wandered through the streets and byways . . . All He wanted was a few men who would think as He did, love as He did, see as He did, teach as He did and serve as He did. All He needed was to revolutionize the hearts of a few, and they would impact the world" (David Platt, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream*).

Who is your church going to invest in that can make a mighty impact for God by being trained to work for Him? Who are you investing in right now?

— Pastor Paul Geelan

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## Kingdom Rock at Wallsend



The first week of July saw Wallsend Church host a Kingdom Rock Kids Club program. On the first day, they had 164 children attend, which Andrew Shield, Children's Ministry Leader for the church, says is the "biggest day we've had in the nine years we've been running these programs."

Throughout the week there was incredible music, Bible stories (which were a highlight for many), snacks, games and wacky experiments with a message. The theme for the week — "Kingdom Rock – Where Kids Stand Strong for God" — was supported with a different Bible point each day that was reinforced throughout the five stations the groups of children rotated through. For example, on the Monday they learned "God's love helps us stand strong."

Andrew adds, "This year, our mission project was supporting ADRA, with more than \$1200 raised. There was an amazing air of excitement and energy throughout the week, with the creativity and dedication of the leaders and crews shining through. Kingdom Rock was attended by children from Kindergarten to Year 6, and they were led by crew leaders from Years 7 through 12. It was a lot of fun for kids and helpers alike."

— Andrew Shield/NorthPoint



## Award for 60 years of CPA membership

At a special award function in "The Tree House" function room on 27 May at The University of Newcastle, George Laxton was presented his 60 years of membership certificate as a Fellow of the Certified Practising Accountants of Australia. Members of George's family, including Nerida and Ian Miller, and Doreen Laxton, had the pleasure of attending the function.

The convenors of the function were very pleased George could be there, as they do not get to present many awards such as this. Being a Fellow of CPA Australia — once the initial qualifications are obtained — requires 15 years in business/accounting with at least five years' experience in an executive position. George gained this experience firstly through lecturing in accounting at Avondale College and Longburn College in New Zealand, then managing the Sydney Adventist Hospital for 15 years, and finally managing the Adventist Development and Relief Agency for 10 years.

— Ian Miller



## OUR CHURCHES

### Quilts for Coonabarabran



Savage bushfires raged through the Warrumbungle National Park in January this year (see the February and March issues of *NorthPoint* for more information), destroying more than 50 homes, killing thousands of livestock and native wildlife. The people of Coonabarabran are still recovering from shock at the ferocity of the fires, and the destruction all around them. They are grateful that no one lost their lives, but many are still coming to terms with the loss they have experienced.

A group of ladies at Toronto Church formed a care team and make patchwork quilts, toiletry bags and other items to show others they care. They decided to send some quilts out to the people of Coonabarabran. Each quilt is handcrafted with love and on the back is a label stating "This quilt was made with love and prayers from the SDA Church 2013." A tag saying the quilt was made by the Toronto SDA Church Care Group and a Gospel are tucked in with each quilt.

Nineteen quilts were taken out to Coonabarabran one Sabbath morning and presented to the folk at the church. "They had a church lunch afterwards and it was lovely to talk to the people. We heard so many stories about things that had happened in the fire. A lot of the church people were involved with ADRA and with finding homes for displaced persons and in following up with them. They chose the quilts they wanted to give out and told us who they were giving them to," says Chris Drury.

The Hunter family and their three little girls lost everything during the fires, leaving their little hobby farm an eerie wasteland. They were overwhelmed as the church folk presented them with a large quilt and three little quilts for the girls. "The parents were visibly moved and this has been a very good thing you have all done. Other families have heard of the quilts and I do know our church has taken a profile that for too long has been elusive until now," Rodney MacCallum wrote.

Jenny and her husband Martin lived in a humble shed on their property. They had started to build their dream home when the fires destroyed everything they had done. Church folk gave them a quilt and they were so grateful they couldn't stop saying thank you. "Jen has had contact with our church over the years and just having that little token emblem on the back of the quilt will remind her of how much we care for her," says Kim Canham.

John and Jackie, like many of the others, didn't sleep for days as they battled the fires on their property, but they lost just about everything. "Jackie was so over whelmed with the beautiful blue quilt with the apricot blocks on the back! We both had tears in our eyes and I get goose bumps thinking about this. She said that they felt alone in a sense because they had lost so much . . . That quilt impacted them both," says Kim.

There were many others who were blessed with the quilts and "the love they generated will warm more than feet."

The Toronto team is busy making more quilts to cheer the hearts of the lonely, the sick and those who have lost loved ones. It is a labour of love, but makes a huge impact on those touched by their loving care.

— Michelle Down

## Adventist Book Centre Redevelopment



After redevelopment work at the Adventist Book Centre (ABC) in Cooranbong commenced in February this year, it is now nearly complete.

The building has been extended (both front and rear), rendered and painted, and its interiors redesigned to provide more space — particularly now that the Sanitarium shop that had previously been located at the factory has been incorporated into the ABC.

Allan Hill, Manager of the ABC in Cooranbong, says, "The Food Shop opened on Monday, 8 July and the comments that we have received [about it] have been exceptional."

The redevelopment has also seen a basement added so that the ABC's forklift can be securely stored. New offices have been constructed for Allan and his staff. The ramp at the front of the building provides safe, easy access for those who are less mobile.

The store still features all of the great ABC products, albeit in totally updated surroundings, so you'll be able to find specials, products of the month and gifts. The store also stocks audio books, Pathfinder material, lesson pamphlets, communion equipment, CDs and DVDs.

If you want to see more, Allan and his team at the ABC in Cooranbong welcome everyone who's interested.

The shop is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm Mondays to Thursdays, and 9.00am to 2.00pm Fridays.

For more information, free call 1800 231 061, visit <[www.adventistbookshop.com.au](http://www.adventistbookshop.com.au)> or connect with the Adventist Book Centre Cooranbong on Facebook (their Facebook page features a redevelopment photo journal, as well as information about sale items).



# MOMENT OF TRUTH



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**2013**

## Best of Europe Tour May 2014

The Best of Europe Tour 2013 was an outstanding success, with everyone delighted with the highlights of Switzerland, Austria and Italy.

The 2014 tour (in late May) is going to be even better.

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For more information, contact Pastor Harold Harker on (02) 4385 8282 or email [harold.harker@gmail.com](mailto:harold.harker@gmail.com).

