

A FINE FELLOW:
ALUMNUS NOW A
PAPERBACK WRITER P. 11

ANTHONY REFLECTS ON
THE GOOD OF GOD P. 13



“THIS DEGREE’S FOR YOU, DAD”

Stephanie Barber came to Avondale to get an education but leaves with so much more. The experience has “changed my life, my children’s lives, our whole perspective. Looking back at the person I was when I first enrolled, I’m now totally different.” Her story is best told in her own words. It begins with her father, to whom she dedicates her counselling degree.

[Read Stephanie’s story inside >](#)

Your University

Avondale's Adventist identity finds expression in these purpose, way and impact statements.

OUR PURPOSE: To transform lives through Christ-centred higher education.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU: We will model lifelong learning as a calling, not a career.

THE WAY: Engage students in authentic, faith-based learning and discovery.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU: We will nurture and care for the whole person.

OUR IMPACT: Empowering graduates and staff to serve their world for good.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU: We will share "a greater vision" of world needs.

We share your values. They are our foundation and enable students to have a transformational learning experience.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU: We will protect and preserve them.



EXCELLENCE



SPIRITUALITY



WELLBEING



INTEGRITY



SERVICE

I want to begin by saying thank you. I enjoyed the opportunity of spending time at two Seventh-day Adventist camp-meetings in the past few weeks, meeting church members like you and listening to their perspectives and reflections in regards to Avondale. Those of us who work here have been entrusted with furthering the mission of the church and you, as our key stakeholders, continue to show strong interest in our effectiveness and success.

It has also been valuable to reflect on feedback from a recent survey of church members from Australia and New Zealand.* The survey explores factors perceived as being enablers and inhibitors to students attending Avondale. I found it encouraging to hear from members whose lives (or the lives of people they know) were transformed at Avondale and who heeded the call to go and make a positive impact in their community. I also found it valuable to hear from those who wanted to see change or shared concerns.

LETTER FROM THE VC



The perception from some is that in pursuing university status, Avondale has lost sight of its purpose—that some of the influences are not those that lead to a deeper commitment to Christ and the mission of the church. Factors seen as important in enabling students to attend Avondale included our Christian philosophy, quality of courses and nurture. The key inhibitors: cost, limited course options and a perceived lack of spirituality. What church members would most like to hear from Avondale are stories about transformed lives and service to others.

I am grateful for your honest voices because we live in a time when we need a place for our young adults (and those of all ages) to find Christ and a sense of mission. Please pray for wisdom and strength as we fulfil God's purpose. As He promises, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you" (Psalm 32:8, NLT).

K. J. Petrie

Professor Kevin Petrie

Vice-Chancellor and President

* The survey is still open and takes only six to eight minutes to complete. Start the survey here: www.surveymonkey.com/r/D6BCPRK.

Transformed Vol 34 Special Issue

Editor: Brenton Stacey, brenton.stacey@avondale.edu.au

Read about how the Avondale experience transforms lives. **Subscribe**





STEPHANIE FINDS PEACE

I'm the youngest of four. My parents and siblings are all high achievers and I felt I didn't measure up. I dropped out of school. I spent a lot of time as a single, stay-at-home mum. And I cleaned houses to top up my welfare payments. It was just a struggle. So, I thought, *I want to show Dad I can do this*, too. I wanted him to see me get that degree—I got a prize for excellence as well. But Dad passed away in February, so he never got to see me graduate. He tried to hold on but couldn't. I wrote him a letter. "Can you still come to my graduation?" And I wrote, "Please." I put it in his pocket at the viewing. I took a framed picture of him to the ceremony in April, and he sat in the audience with Mum and the girls.

I planned to study at another university—I didn't have high hopes. The girls and I lived in a rental and the owners wanted the house back. The only house available was further away, in Morisset. I couldn't work out how I'd get to classes with two children at school and one at home. Then I realised, *Avondale's right there*.

The staff spoke to me with courtesy and respect—I wasn't used to that. I wanted to study counselling because I'd been through

a lot of stuff. Then I met Paul [course convenor Paul Bogacs]. From feeling like I was nothing to having my lecturer tell me I'm a super mum was such a contrast. It inspired me. One of my clients is a young mum who's just come off a heavy drug addiction. She said, "You tell what's good about me." That's what Paul did. By highlighting my strengths and capabilities, he helped turn my life around.

I started to read *The Passion Translation* because I didn't think I'd understand the Bible. I finished reading the whole New Testament. My second eldest child Rikki and I were baptised, two years into my course. My youngest, Hollie, was baptised last year. I'm now reading a chapter of *The Desire of Ages* each day.

I see five clients a day and have a month-long waiting list. I look at them through the eyes of Jesus, as human beings capable of transformation. One was an ex-police officer. He was very hard and bitter and very sceptical. We only had eight sessions and in the end I couldn't stop him from talking about the Bible. I said, "Look at you. Remember your first session?" And he said, "Yes, I know, I was full of hatred." He found peace. That's what we all want.

The horrible things we sometimes say and do are just covering pain. The key to understanding each other, no matter how we come across, is recognising we're doing the best we can. If we're non-judgemental and accepting, others will respond.

Stephanie Barber is a vocational counsellor at Ability Options.

Scan QR code to download more information about our Graduate Diploma of Counselling.



POSITIONS VACANT

AVONDALE UNIVERSITY'S POSTGRADUATE STUDY OPTIONS
ARE FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO UPSKILL OR CHANGE CAREERS.



Follow God's calling and make a positive difference through study options in:

- | Business
- | Counselling
- | Education
- | Lifestyle Medicine
- | Ministry and Theology
- | Nursing

Scan to find out more



POSTGRADUATE TRENDS

MEET OUR STUDENTS

Amanda Oakes

LIFESTYLE MEDICINE | PHYSIOTHERAPIST | KATHU, NCP, SOUTH AFRICA

What's one thing we wouldn't know about you?

I'm a Pilates instructor.

Name your top personal achievement. Launching my own lifestyle and wellness brand, Reboot-U-Wellness.

What are you reading? *The 5am Club* by Robin Sharma.

Who's your hero? Plant-based dietician and author Brenda Davis. She shares scientific knowledge in simple terms.

What about your study motivates you? The more you learn, the more evident it is how little you know. That's humbling.



Brent O'Brien

EDUCATION | LEARNING SUPPORT OFFICER | KILABEN BAY, NSW

Name your top professional achievement. Moving to Asia at 24 and getting a job. And starting the homepage for the Asian region of a multinational financial information company—it won an award in its first year.

How do you define success? Helping students realise their potential. Sometimes this means working on literacy and numeracy or just kicking a ball and having a chat.

What are you reading? You mean what I should be reading? My wife's latest young adult novel.

Kerina-Lee Joy

THEOLOGY | MINISTER | SYDNEY, NSW

What's one thing we wouldn't know about you? I'm a digital pastor for a church in Auckland and a community pastor for a lifestyle and mission centre in Sydney.

How do you define success? Seeing a person return to the centre. It's an opportunity to journey with them.

What are you reading? *A Call To Stand Apart*, a compilation of writings by Ellen White.

Who's your hero? Jonah. His success as an evangelist fascinates me.

"My love in life is . . ." God's Word.



Matthew Siliga

BUSINESS | ADMINISTRATOR | WASHINGTON, DC, USA

What's one thing we wouldn't know about you? As ADRA International's VP for Marketing and Development, I'm also responsible for global advocacy, a unit that works with UN agencies to influence government policy.

How do you define success? Making an impact in more communities and in more significant ways.

Who's your hero? Poet Amanda Gorman for her courage.

"My love in life is . . ." Helping people experience the fullness of life as God intended.

Shirley Fatnowna

NURSING | INDIGENOUS SUPPORT OFFICER | THORNLEIGH, NSW

Name your top personal achievement. Becoming a registered nurse.

What's one thing we wouldn't know about you? I've helped coordinate three fly'n'build trips to the Solomons.

What are you reading? *A Powerful and Moving Account of a Kanaka Family: Fragments of a Lost Heritage* by my late father, Noel. The book keeps me balanced.

"My love in life is . . ." Serving God and giving back.

What about your study motivates you? I want to inspire indigenous students. If I can study, they can, too.



2021 AVONDALE IMPACT SUMMARY



Thank you for your support in 2021.

By helping us enhance the Avondale experience, preserve our heritage and as a partner in discovery, you have transformed lives through Christ-centred higher education.

Here are some examples of the impact you have helped us make.

Professor Kevin Petrie
Vice-Chancellor and President

AVONDALE EXPERIENCE



299

Number of students graduating in 2021.



91

Per cent of students who got a full-time job after graduating. This is above the national average.



\$85,000

Your investment in equipping teachers of tomorrow for purposeful Christian science teaching and helping leaders of tomorrow reach their God-given potential.



6

Inspirational albums recorded by our vocal ensemble, The Promise. The latest, *It Is Well*, is available through digital music stores.

WHOLISTIC HERITAGE



7200

Money you raised through purchase of Alumni Heritage Walk pavers to preserve and restore heritage features on the Lake Macquarie campus.



TOP ALUMNI

Our top awards recognised alumni for: bringing healing and hope amid grief and loss; showing concern for and commitment to the care of retirees, and; prioritising people while confronting change.



257

Alumni who registered online to attend Homecoming; a record.



124

Years we have been engaging in authentic, faith-based learning and discovery that empowers students and staff to serve their world for good.



FAITHFUL DISCOVERY



PHD SUCCESS

Two of our staff earned PhDs. One developed a model for delivering humanitarian nursing care in low- and middle-income countries; the other studied the conductor's role as musicianship mentor.



184

Publications by Avondale academics. Includes the book *Revealing Jesus in the Learning Environment: Evidence and Impact* and 129 articles in the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*.



4000

People in Lake Macquarie who participated in an "educational adventure" created by our lifestyle medicine pioneer Darren Morton. More than 90% said it will have a "positive, long-term influence" on wellbeing.



12

Columns by Avondale Seminary staff members in newsmagazine *Adventist Record* to encourage better reading of the Bible.



15

Clients benefitting from advice, executive coaching and leadership training provided by Avondale Business School.

**#1 IN
NURSING**
overall*

**#1 IN
MINISTRY & THEOLOGY**
for employment*

**#1 IN
TEACHING**
for graduate satisfaction*

TOP 10 FOR STUDENT SATISFACTION, GOOD TEACHING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT*

*Student Experience Survey 2019-2020.
Visit compared.edu.au for more information.

TAKE THE HOMECOMING Honour Year Quiz

Do you remember what world events happened during your time at Avondale? Take our short Homecoming honour year quiz* and find out.

1. In what year did the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission grant equal pay for men and women?
2. On February 6, 1952, which English monarch died and was succeeded by his daughter?
3. Which former Australian prime minister was dubbed the "Lizard of Oz" by a British tabloid for breaking protocol and placing his hand on the Queen's back during her 1992 visit?
4. Who won Australia's first gold medal in speed skating at the 2002 Winter Olympics?
5. Who were the prime ministers of Australia and New Zealand in 1962?
6. In what year did Australia's first female prime minister deliver her "misogyny speech" to parliament?
7. What is the name of an iconic Australian film featuring American actor Kirk Douglas, and what year was it released?

*All information sourced from Wikipedia.

Answers: 1. 1972 2. King George VI 3. Paul Keating 4. Steven Bradbury 5. Robert Menzies and Keith Holyoake 6. 2012 7. The Man from Snowy River, released in 1982

Register



RECONNECT
REMINISCE
SHARE YOUR JOURNEY

2012 | 2002 | 1992 | 1982 | 1972 | 1962 | 1952

HOMECOMING2022

 **Avondale**
UNIVERSITY



A FINE FELLOW

ALUMNUS NOW
RESEARCHER AND
PAPERBACK WRITER

A grand hotel in Melbourne, actor Clark Gable, a Hollywood stunt double, Australian firsts, the Southern Hemisphere's first international aviator, and cyclones: writing a book about each is beyond what Chrystopher Spicer (BA, DipTch, 1982) once thought possible.

Having left home before finishing high school, he travelled the world working on deep-sea trawlers and cruise ships, in a record factory, then with Angus and Robertson. The offer of a managerial role led to a "now or never" decision: Chrystopher would complete his education at night school and head north to study at Avondale. Two worlds collided as he adjusted to the strict conditions, but his four years on campus awakened personal growth and academic orientation. Singing with the choir brought much needed confidence.

Offered the opportunity to complete a master's at Andrews, Chrystopher accepted the challenge, graduating in 1984. Returning to Australia, he found a job at Victoria University and got others on the side, including archivist for The Windsor. A labour of love, Chrystopher's biography of the historic hotel is called *Duchess*.

Chrystopher connected with Marilyn Monroe biographer Donald Spoto, who encouraged him to profile Clark Gable, about whom little had been published. While researching at Boise State University (Idaho, USA), Chrystopher met Marcella, evening manager of the Microfilm Department. They stayed in touch and when

Marcella visited Australia, Chrystopher proposed. They married at The Windsor.

A change in university course structure saw Chrystopher seek work elsewhere. Marcella suggested an adventure—to Cairns in Far North Queensland. She returned to social work and he taught at James Cook University, co-writing *Fall Girl* with Martha Crawford Cantarini about her life as a stunt double in Hollywood. *Great Australian World Firsts* followed but then came a sharp turn. Marcella developed three cysts on her brain. Rushed to hospital in an unresponsive state, she died but was revived. Chrystopher had only three minutes to say goodbye before Marcella was flown to Townsville and placed in an induced coma. To the amazement of the medics, she survived numerous operations and has since recovered many of her everyday functions.

While the context of their lives is different, Chrystopher is expanding his life view to match Marcella's different capabilities. She's back in social work. During the healing years, Chrystopher published a book about aviator Jessie "Chubbie" Miller.

Chrystopher describes his Avondale experience as a "bridging moment" to another world—of lifelong learning and accomplishment. Now with a PhD from James Cook, and another book, *Cyclone Country*, Chrystopher is an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow working on a project about Australian Pacific trader and author Louis Becke.—*Rachel Humphries, Alumni Relations Officer*



**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled
and do not be afraid.**

John 14:27, NIV

ANTHONY DISCOVERS NEW WAY

SEMINARIAN
REFLECTS ON THE
GOOD OF GOD

Dr Anthony MacPherson's roles at work, as course convenor for our Master of Arts (Theology), and at home, as husband and father, are not too dissimilar—both involve faith and fun. "My greatest love in life is listening to my wife and kids laugh, talk, pray and worship together."

This picture of happiness at home reflects a deeper desire: to see renewal in the church "by rediscovering old or neglected essentials in a new way." The most essential: an appreciation of biblical theology and doctrine. "In Scripture, God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. This is a profoundly deep, content-rich revelation. There is no way of rediscovering God outside of this." But rediscovery requires commitment. "Renewal that is more than an emotional high will inevitably wrestle with the depths of Scripture."

With pastoral experience, Anthony has seen evidence of renewal in local churches. "The Bible is devoured. Prayer and praise and witness and worship appear alongside sacrifice and service as one's first pursuit, not as some receding memory. God is

not an addition or afterthought. A irrepressible and persistent longing for Him just has to be expressed."

A new position—as Head of Theology at Fulton Adventist University College—and a PhD followed. The doctoral thesis explored another new way—that of understanding the relationship between a good God and evil. Using the Great Controversy motif, Anthony argued God doesn't want or need evil to produce greater good but sacrifices Himself to redeem and restore the good we have lost and to overcome evil we should never have embraced.

After four years in Fiji, Anthony had mixed feeling about leaving. The country promotes itself as "open for happiness." Anthony found it "literally everywhere: in the adults and the children, in the songs, in shared meals, in church. I always found it while snorkelling amid the coral reefs." He found it in the classroom, too, with students whose relationship with God reinforced a defining characteristic of the divine. "God is unyieldingly patient. He was with them, He is with me and you."



HELP YOUR CLIENTS AND PATIENTS CEASE SMOKING

Develop an informed empathy for smokers and learn a range of evidence-based strategies to help your clients or patients with tobacco control. If you are a health educator, allied health professional or doctor, add a Nicotine Addiction and Smoking Cessation micro-credential to your existing qualifications. The unit is taught by Conjoint Professor Renee Bittoun, an internationally recognised expert with more than 40 years of experience. She started one of the world's first Smokers' Clinics at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney in 1979. Study the unit on its own or have it count towards a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma of Lifestyle Medicine. Begins in August.



Scan the QR code to download your course guide.



GRADUATION A MILESTONE DAY FOR MBA

The first students have graduated from our new Master of Business Administration. Homa Freeman (pictured) and Meleofa Fifita-Tovo received their testamurs from Vice-Chancellor Professor Kevin Petrie during the 2021 ceremony in April—Emil Shafik received hers in absentia. Course convenor Dr Warrick Long described the milestone as “a momentous day.” And he congratulated the students. “Your hard work has paid off.” The course is practical, with no exams, so you can apply learnings directly to your work. And flexible, online classes help you balance study with other commitments. Enrolment has increased since the change from the Master of Leadership and Management.



Scan the QR code to download your course guide.



MEET HANNAH

A NURSING LECTURER
WHO NEEDS YOUR HELP

Hannah Kent trains nurses on our Lake Macquarie campus without access to a modern, hospital ward-like lab. So, learning lacks full impact. “A new Sim Lab will help our students feel more confident when things get tough on the ward.” Hannah knows from firsthand experience.

“I’m a third-generation nurse—my mother and grandmother are both nurses. I’ve always wanted to help people and felt that was my career calling as well.

“I completed my new graduate program at the San [Sydney Adventist Hospital]. I like to be in control of a situation, so I then went on to specialise in a cardiac critical care unit. I thought, *What’s the worst thing that can happen to a patient? They have an arrest.* I wanted to know how to deal with a situation like that.

“I grew a lot personally and professionally at Avondale. Now I want to help other students feel more confident as nurses-in-training. I always have time to talk a student through something or to show

them how something’s done. Knowledge is powerful. We need to share it because, ultimately, our patients benefit through improved safety.

“You see the light switch go on when students are in the Sim Lab. It’s rewarding to hear the students say, “Oh, this makes sense. This is how we’re going to apply what we’ve learnt.” They get to practice skills they’ll use every single day on every single shift. As lecturers, we all want more lab time. Having a larger, more modern Sim Lab on our Lake Macquarie campus will give our student more hands-on experience before their clinical placements.

“A lot of hard work goes into studying to be a nurse. You have to apply yourself because, at the end of only three years, you’re responsible for someone’s life.”

If you missed the Avondale Offering last week, turn the page to donate.

For Hannah’s full story, scan the QR code and watch the video.





You can donate to the
Avondale Offering to set up a Sim Lab
for nursing students until June 30.*

Give online now



avondale.edu.au/giving

*Donations over \$2 are tax deductible in Australia.