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Avondale performs above its weight
Another PhD graduate
Major grant for health research

General Conference honours Dr Arthur Patrick

Avondale alumnus Dr Arthur Patrick was recently selected for a place on the prestigious Wall of Adventist Historians at the world headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Silver Spring, Maryland, USA. The wall honours researchers whose publications have made an outstanding contribution to Seventh-day Adventist historiography. Dr Patrick shares a place on the wall with eminent Adventist historians such as Le Roy Froom, Gary Land, Richard Schwarz and Arthur Spalding. Selection for a place on the wall is made posthumously.

Dr Patrick has made a notable contribution to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a pastor, hospital chaplain, teacher, administrator, scholar and writer. The *Adventist Periodical Index* lists 121 titles from his pen, representing only a portion of his scholarly output. One of his most significant recent publications is a chapter in the book *Ellen Harmon White. American Prophet* (Oxford University Press), a com-



Wall of Adventist Historians. Dr Arthur Patrick 3rd row, 2nd picture from left.

prehensive scholarly treatment of Ellen White's life, career and cultural context. In 2013 Dr Patrick was awarded the prestigious Charles E. Weniger medallion, bestowed on Seventh-day Adventists who have made highly significant contributions to their communities.

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Avondale connects to national research network

Avondale is now connected to the Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet), giving high-speed internet access to researchers and research resources worldwide.

AARNet's advanced network infrastructure interconnects educational and research institutions and organisations with the global research and education community, giving access to extensive research resources. Its services include cloud

storage, video conferencing and global wireless network access. "It just opens up the world," says Vice President (Academic and Research) Professor Anthony Williams. "We now have the capacity to really innovate online."

AARNet is a not-for-profit organisation with 38 Australian universities and the CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) as the shareholders.

Avondale performs above its weight John Cox

Avondale has consistently achieved high rankings for quality of teaching, generic skills, employment outcomes and overall graduate satisfaction in annual surveys of higher education graduates conducted by the Commonwealth. Avondale's reputation for strong graduate outcomes prompted me to research the careers of people who studied here during my own student years at Avondale, 1957-1961.

At that time Avondale had small enrolments (average 340 per year), with very few students studying degree programs. Most courses were offered at certificate level. Yet some of the career outcomes from those years have been quite remarkable.

Of the 69 degree graduates in the period 1957-1961, at least 21 (about 30 per cent) subsequently attained doctoral degrees – a far higher proportion than in most higher education institutions. Nine others who studied degree subjects without graduating from Avondale also went on to achieve doctorates, making a total of 30 known doctorates from those years. It is likely that some additional doctorates may have been gained by international students whose careers I have not been able to trace.

Alumni from the years 1957-1961 have made an immense contribution to the mission of the Adventist church and to the wider global community. Two have been awarded the Order of Australia.

Helen Hall received the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in 2006 for her educational work at the Eden Valley Academy, which she established more than 30 years ago in Karen refugee camps on the Thailand-Myanmar border. Conditions are difficult and dangerous. The school has had to move six or seven times; armed gangs in the camps damage the school facilities and have bashed two of the teachers; there is danger from Burmese gunfire from across the river; water is turned on only twice a day; and it is dangerous to go out at night. Helen trains her own teachers. With over 900 students, the school has maintained a reputation for high educational standards. Each year some of its Year 12 students proceed to degree programs at Asia-Pacific International University, Thailand.

Clive Pascoe was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his outstanding contribution to music education. At the peak of his career he was Professor of Music and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Southern Cross University, where he developed a highly innovative music education program. A number of his former students have made major contributions to the international music scene. He was also Senior Vice President and Director of Education at SAE International, one of the world's leading educators in creative media, with 53 campuses in 27 countries. For 28 years he conducted *Messiah* performances in the Sydney Town Hall, demanding rigorous standards from his musicians.

Four alumni from the years 1957-1961 were later elected to leadership roles at the global headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Six others became conference presidents,

two at union level. Six alumni from the period became missionaries to India, and numerous others served in Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Islands and other parts of the world. Four alumni from those years became university or college presidents. Two became chief executive officers of Sydney Adventist Hospital, and at least five became medical doctors. One alumnus of the period became chief executive officer of what is now Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing. At least six became education directors and/or principals of large schools. Some became highly successful business people. Many have made significant contributions to the church and wider community as pastors, evangelists, teachers, accountants, nurses, and as church members in a variety of occupations.



Dr William Johnsson became one of the foremost thought leaders of the Adventist Church, serving as editor of *Adventist Review* for 25 years, pioneering the development of *Adventist World* magazine, and authoring more than 20 books and well over 1000 articles. From 1975 to 1980 he taught New Testament

at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, Michigan, having previously taught at Spicer College, India.



Dr Lyn Behrens became the president and chief executive officer of Loma Linda University Adventist Health Sciences Center, the umbrella organisation for Loma Linda University, Loma Linda Medical Center and affiliated organisations.



Dr Barry Taylor joined the faculty of Loma Linda University in 1976. He was appointed Chair of the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics in 1988, Vice President for Research Affairs in 2000, and Vice Chancellor for Research Affairs in 2002. His research publications are extensive.

Dr Owen Hughes became Vice-Chancellor of Pacific Adventist University. **Dr Arthur Patrick** became a pastor, teacher, chaplain, scholar and notable church historian (see page 2). The General Conference of 1990 honoured **Eleanor Scale** (nee Hawke) as Adventist Woman of the Year.

Pastor John Carter became one of the world's most inspiring and fearless evangelists, leading many thousands of people to Christ in Russia and other countries, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances.



Sione Kite (R) with Jacques Delors, President, European Commission, 1992.

Tongan student **Sione (John) Kite** became his country's ambassador to the United Kingdom and head of the Tongan mission to the European Community.

Dr Leon Clark is the chief executive officer of Adventist HealthCare Limited, which includes the Sydney Adventist Hospital, Dalcross Adventist Hospital, San Day Surgery

Hornsby, and San Diagnostics and Pharmacy. Dr Clark has overseen a major expansion of the Sydney Adventist Hospital, has added new businesses to the Adventist HealthCare consortium, and has fostered a relationship between the San and the University of Sydney, leading to the San becoming a teaching hospital of the university.

Dr Tom Ludowici became a much loved pastor, head chap-

lain at the Sydney Adventist Hospital, founder and director of the hospital's Christian Bioethics Centre, and director of mission at the hospital (see page 12).

Dr Sid Cole became head of Adventist health food enterprises in Inter-America and South America, and on his return to Australia directed cutting-edge food research as head scientist of Sanitarium's Development and Innovations Group.

Space has permitted only a selection of the career outcomes from those years. Not least among Avondale's alumni are the many people whose influence has been less public, but who in a quiet way have spread the love of God and advanced his kingdom in their communities by giving help and compassion to people in need of love and encouragement. I am convinced that the Lord sees such witness as one of the most significant and lasting contributions to his kingdom. The ongoing influence of alumni who live Avondale's "greater vision of world needs" is beyond estimation.

Eminent alumnus: Teshome Wagaw

Teshome Wagaw was one of several students from Ethiopia who studied at Avondale in the late 1950s and early 1960s. All have achieved notable careers.

After graduating from Avondale in 1957 with a Bachelor of Arts in secondary education, Teshome Wagaw taught initially in Ethiopia, then in 1965 gained a PhD at the University of Maryland, USA. He served on the faculty of Haile Selassie I University in Ethiopia for eight years, becoming a professor, chair of psychology and faculty dean. He went on to achieve international eminence for his research in comparative education and in sociological and ethnic issues, especially in relation to Africa, the Middle East and black America.

From 1975 to 2003 he served on the faculty of the University of Michigan, USA, becoming Professor of Education, Professor of Afro-American and African Studies, and Research Scientist, College of Literature, Science and the Arts. He has also held appointments at the University of Maryland, Howard University (Washington D.C.), and Michigan State University, and has served as Fulbright Visiting Professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



Teshome Wagaw as an Avondale graduate, 1957.

Professor Wagaw has authored five books, several major reports, and an extensive list of journal articles and book chapters. His publications include the first comprehensive study of the education system of Ethiopia and the first ethnographic study of Ethiopians in Israel. He has served as consultant to the United Nations, the World Bank, and the Ethiopian and Egyptian governments. He is a Fellow of the Truman Institute for the Study of Peace.

His honours and awards include two Fulbright Awards, a German Academic Exchange Award, awards from the Ameri-

can Council of Education and from the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities, and an Annenberg Institute Fellowship.

He is in the true sense a global scholar. He has lived and worked in Ethiopia, Australia, the Middle East, South Africa and the United States, and has held visiting lectureships in Japan, South Korea, the Middle East, and a number of European countries.

Other high-achieving Ethiopian alumni

Truneh Selassie graduated from Avondale in 1961 with a Bachelor of Arts in secondary education. On returning to his



Pastor Truneh Selassie

homeland he served as a school principal, as academic dean of the Adventist college in Ethiopia, then as education director, youth director and stewardship director of the Ethiopian Union of the Adventist Church. He served as general secretary of the Ethiopian Union for ten years, followed by four years as union president.

In retirement he delivers Christian radio broadcasts, conducts evangelistic programs in Ethiopia and other countries, and speaks at campmeetings. He has written three books, including a history of Adventism in Ethiopia.

Redai Brru, who graduated from Avondale in 1963 with a Bachelor of Arts in secondary education, served as a teacher in Ethiopia and subsequently as a lecturer at a government teacher education college, where he was honoured as Educator of the Year.

Tsegai Wari, who graduated in 1963 with a Diploma in Accountancy, achieved success in business and assisted the Adventist Church in various business capacities.

Girma Damte, who graduated in 1966 with a Bachelor of Arts in theology, served as a pastor and in administrative roles in the Ethiopian Union of the Adventist Church. He has written

six books in Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia.

The late 1950s and early 1960s were among the peak years for international students at Avondale. Between 1957 and 1961, one in every eight Avondale students came from overseas. Many of these have been highly successful in their careers, making notable contributions to community and church.

Professor Lawrence Geraty visits Avondale



Professor Lawrence Geraty

Professor Lawrence Geraty of La Sierra University, California, opened fresh perspectives for Avondale audiences in a series of three public lectures in August, in which he shared insights from his distinguished career in archaeology and higher education.

After gaining a Harvard doctorate in Hebrew Bible and biblical archaeology, Geraty succeeded Dr Siegfried Horn as Professor of Archaeology and

History of Antiquity at Andrews University, Michigan. In his 13 years in this position he directed major archaeological expeditions in the Middle East. He has served as president of several scholarly societies, has received numerous academic honours, and has lectured worldwide. He has edited 8 books, contributed to 30 more, and written more than 50 articles for scholarly journals. In 1985 he became president of Atlantic Union College, Massachusetts, and in 1993 president of La Sierra University, California. Since retiring from the presidency in 2007, he has continued to teach in the university's School of Divinity.

Geraty's first lecture on his recent visit to Avondale was a **tribute to Dr Siegfried Horn**, pioneer Adventist archaeologist who taught at Andrews University from 1951 to 1976, and was one of the most distinguished scholars ever to serve the church. Horn initiated and directed the first major archaeological project under Adventist auspices, at biblical Heshbon in Jordan (1968-1973). His massive scholarship informed large sections of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* and *Bible Dictionary*. He authored 16 books and over 800 refereed journal articles, and was founding editor (1963-1974) of the scholarly journal *Andrews University Seminary Studies*. Horn kept a meticulous record of his daily thoughts and activities in a diary of 35 volumes composed over a period of 70 years (1924-1993). Professor Geraty, who has inherited these vol-

umes, shared in his Avondale lecture some of the significant insights they contain into trends within the Adventist Church during Horn's lifetime. Geraty hopes to have the diaries transcribed and published for the benefit of the Church.

Professor Geraty discussed in a second lecture the **Madaba Plains archaeological project in Jordan**, which he directed for many years. Items unearthed in the project, between the Arnon and Jabbok Rivers north-east of the Dead Sea, have illuminated our understanding of numerous biblical references. King Hussein of Jordan has been an interested supporter of the project, which has also been praised by biblical archaeologists. At a time when some people seeking to "prove" the Bible have been less than honest about claimed archaeological findings, the honesty of Adventist archaeologists has won respect. Geraty stressed that the main value of biblical archaeology is less to "prove" the Bible than to illuminate its contextual backgrounds. At a time when many universities have abandoned archaeology for literary studies of the Bible, he said that the future of biblical archaeology rests with conservative Christians such as Adventists, who value all aspects of the Bible.

Geraty also delivered the **Murdoch Lecture** in association with Avondale's Homecoming weekend. In this lecture he focused on the **nature and purpose of Christian higher education**. He observed that while Christian higher education must serve the needs of individual students, encouraging creativity and independence, it is also guided by community concerns. While a Christian college is primarily an institution of learning, it is also a place where faith and learning integrate, giving direction and meaning to learning. Referring to the multicultural diversity on Avondale's campus, Geraty noted that Christian higher education respects and values difference.

A Christian higher education institution, he said, is "not a fraternity for the perfect but a support group for those needing growth." It is also a place "for those who've already experienced God's working in their lives. . . a classroom for spiritual instruction, . . . a place where people seek to become all that God has in mind for them to be."¹

¹ Geraty applied these words from the purpose statement of the Markham Woods Seventh-day Adventist Church, Florida.

Another PhD graduate for Avondale

Pastor Paul Rankin, Associate Director of the Adventist Health Department in the South Pacific, will be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the 2014 Avondale graduation. He will be the second Avondale PhD candidate to receive the award. A further 29 candidates are enrolled in Avondale's PhD program.

Rankin's PhD research demonstrates persuasively the health benefits of the Coronary Health Improvement Program (CHIP), a 30-day lifestyle intervention program delivered by trained volunteers in local community settings. As CHIP coordinator for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Pastor Rankin, along with his PhD supervisor, Dr Darren Morton, has been involved in redeveloping the CHIP program, which was recently acquired by Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific. CHIP's documented health benefits are so striking that the program has been relaunched as the Complete Health Improvement Program.

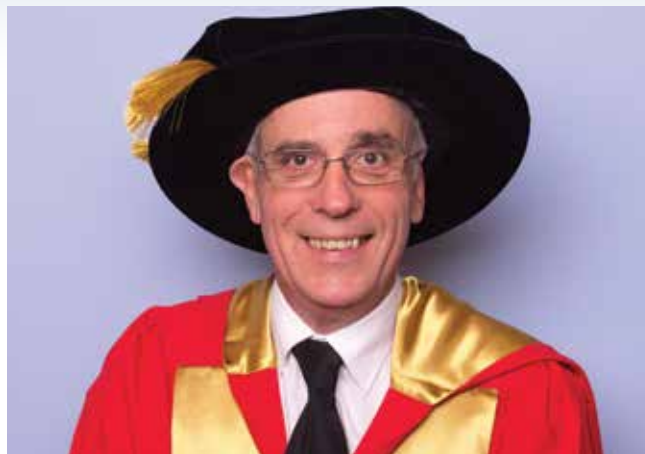
Rankin's doctoral research investigated CHIP's effectiveness in reducing the health risk factors associated with Metabolic Syndrome (MetS), a precursor to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, stroke and dementia. The study analysed test data from 5070 participants in 178 CHIP programs in USA and Canada between 2006 and 2009. In 30 days, participants showed significant reductions in body mass index (3.2%), total cholesterol (11.0%), low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (13.0%), triglycerides (7.7%), fasting plasma glucose (6.1%), and systolic and diastolic blood pressure (4.9% and 5.3 % respectively). The largest reductions occurred in participants with the greatest risk factor levels.

Whereas previous research had focused on lifestyle interventions delivered by professionals, mainly in clinical settings, Rankin's research showed that significant reductions in chronic disease risk factors can be achieved in programs delivered in community settings by appropriately resourced volunteers. This suggests that programs such as CHIP may provide an effective and cost-efficient mode of delivering lifestyle interventions to reduce people's susceptibility to chronic diseases.

Rankin has personally experienced the benefits of the CHIP program – he has lost 35 kilograms since making CHIP lifestyle changes in 2005. "Adopting a much healthier diet and getting more exercise has made a dramatic difference to my quality of life and health risk factors," he says.

Publications from CHIP research

Researchers associated with Avondale's Lifestyle Research Centre have so far published seven refereed articles on the effectiveness of the CHIP program in reducing chronic disease risk factors. These publications, in leading international journals, have given the CHIP program considerable credibility in medical and scientific circles. A representative of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine commented in response to one of the articles that CHIP lifestyle interventions have produced "some of the most impressive recorded clinical changes ever."



Dr Paul Rankin

Other lifestyle publications

Dr Robyn Pearce, senior lecturer in food and nutrition, co-authored an article in the *Journal of Child Health and Nutrition* showing that Australian adolescents, even when from advantaged homes, have a high probability of below optimum omega-3 levels. The study, conducted by a team associated with the Australasian Research Institute at the Sydney Adventist Hospital, investigated omega-3 levels in 251 adolescents from 10 schools in the northern Sydney and Central Coast regions of New South Wales. Since reduced omega-3 levels are linked to serious conditions such as diabetes, asthma and depression, the research suggested that targeted strategies to improve omega-3 intake may be needed. Foods rich in omega-3 include soybeans, walnuts, edible seeds (especially flaxseed), dark green vegetables, oily fish such as salmon, and canola, soy and flaxseed oils.

Dr Cedric Greive and Dr Peter Morey have completed analysis of data related to patterns of caffeine consumption among 945 students in Years 9-11 in Seventh-day Adventist high schools Australia-wide. The researchers were interested to investigate possible relationships between caffeine consumption, sleep patterns, measures of depression, anxiety and stress and self-reported measures of school performance. Results indicate that the quality and sufficiency of sleep is central to good mental health, cooperative classroom behaviour and sound academic performance. While higher levels of caffeine consumption were significantly related to depressed measures of mental health, reduced levels of cooperative behaviour and lower measures of academic achievement, the effects of caffeine consumption were found to be mediated by the quality of sleep.

Dr Darren Morton, senior lecturer in health and exercise science, has been at the forefront of community education in healthy lifestyle. He has authored numerous research publications as well as more popular books and articles on lifestyle and health. His latest book is *Live More Active: Activate Your Life for Good* (Signs Publishing, 2014).

Major grant for research on hospital infections

Avondale's Dr Brett Mitchell is one of 10 chief investigators in a research project with a \$650,000 grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the pre-eminent funding body for medical research in Australia. The 3-year study involving 20 Australian hospitals will investigate the most effective way of cleaning hospitals to reduce health-care associated infections.

Dr Brett Mitchell has co-authored numerous articles and reports on the prevention and control of hospital infections, including a major report, of which he is lead author, entitled *A Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infection in Tasmania 2013-2015*.

Dr Mitchell has co-authored several papers on the increasing incidence of *Clostridium difficile*, an infection that causes severe diarrhoea and can prove fatal. He was the lead researcher of two refereed papers published in 2014 on *Staphylococcus aureus* infections. The first of these papers examined the effectiveness of hydrogen peroxide decontamination for controlling the infection. The second investigated *Staphylococcus aureus* infections in 132 Australian hospitals between 2002 and 2013 – the first longitudinal multi-state and territory study of the infection in Australia. The research found a very significant reduction in *Staphylococcus* infections, from 1.72 cases per 10,000 patient days in 2002 to 0.64 per 10,000 patient days in 2013, representing many lives potentially saved. Improvements in hand hygiene, skin preparation and surgery management have contributed to the reduction. Dr Mitchell describes the findings as “a robust indicator of the improved quality of clinical practice in Australia.”

Other publications by Nursing and Health staff

Dr Malcolm Anderson was the lead author of an article



Dr Brett Mitchell

investigating the impact on family functioning and psychological wellbeing of people caring for relatives with neurological impairment resulting from severe traumatic brain injury. Caregivers reported disrupted family functioning leading to increased psychological distress, which was more pronounced in male than in female caregivers. The findings of the study can assist in tailoring family support strategies for caregivers. Avondale's **Dr Peter Morey** and **Dr Grahame Simpson** of the Liverpool Health Service were co-researchers.

Dr Alison Smedley co-authored an article, published in the *British Journal of Midwifery* (2014), examining midwifery teaching strategies and recommending some alternative teaching approaches. **Sonja Dawson** co-authored an article investigating students' perception of their competency in the administration of oral medication, a skill that tends to be challenging for student nurses, and in which medication errors are common. The research suggested that simulated teaching environments incorporating time management and post-medication situations may prove effective. **Wayne Bradshaw** authored an article on the value of debriefing students following community practice experiences. **Dr Drene Somasundram**, student chaplain in the Faculty of Nursing and Health, contributed a chapter on spirituality to the book *Living with Dementia* (ACER Press, 2013).

Brain function and gender relations



Dr Arlene Taylor

Dr Arlene Taylor, one of the world's leading speakers on brain function, presented a series of lectures at Avondale this year on brain function and gender difference.

With two earned doctorates, Dr Taylor is president of Realizations Inc., dedicated to brain function research and the dissemination of resources to help people improve relationships through an understanding of the brain. Her Avondale lectures explained how an understanding of some of the differences between female and male brains can help improve relationships, reduce frustration, and enhance cross-gender teamwork in the workplace.

She also discussed brain function in romantic relationships. Romantic interest between two people triggers the release of phenylethylamine, which can reduce clarity of mind. This chemical triggers the release of the hormone-like substance dopamine, associated with mate selection. Dopamine then triggers the hormone oxytocin, which makes people

crave touch. These chemical releases may last between 6 and 48 months and then subside, corresponding with the transition from turbulent romantic emotions to a more settled phase of romantic relationships. When these chemical releases begin to subside, couples may feel they are no longer in love, and at this point many relationships break up.

Dr Taylor recommends socialising with lots of people before committing to a romantic relationship, and advises new couples to experience a variety of environments and experiences with each other. “Get to know the other person's family,” she adds, “because – trust me – you marry the family. Both you and your partner carry three generations of cellular memory that's going to impact on the relationship.”

Dr Taylor advises that sexual intercourse is best left to those in committed, long-term relationships. “Every time you have sex,” she says, “you create cellular memory that tends to bond you to that partner.” When a person marries, the cellular memory of previous liaisons can impair the relationship. She advises married couples to keep learning how to become better lovers.

Intrepid alumnus: Pastor David Currie John Cox

Throughout his long career, Pastor David Currie has been a tireless witness to the good news of Jesus Christ. At an early age he caught a vision for evangelism, which has been his life's passion ever since.

At the age of 15 David and his friend Athal Tolhurst attended an evangelism workshop at a youth congress, and were inspired to run a series of evangelistic meetings in their home town of Hamilton, New Zealand. That series started a flame in both young men that has never gone out.

After graduating from Avondale in 1955, David Currie quickly established a reputation as a successful evangelist in Tasmania (1956-1959), Western Australia (1960-1963), and New Zealand (1964-1970). His reputation as a warm-hearted pastor and powerful witness for Christ brought an invitation to teach evangelism and pastoral ministry at Avondale for the next four years (1971-1974), followed by five years as evangelist and pastors' pastor in the United Kingdom (1975-1979). Mentoring other ministers has always been a strength of Pastor Currie's ministry.

Pioneering evangelism in the Balkans

Pastor Currie's most memorable experiences were his evangelistic programs in Croatia and Albania after the fall of the Communist regimes in the Balkans. His 1991 series in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, attracted 10,000 people to the opening meetings – the first public meetings in Croatia by any church since the beginning of the Communist era. Over the next four years more than 350 people were baptised in Zagreb, including many business and professional people, and a new church was established. During the Balkan War Currie braved the cluster bombs rocketing into Zagreb to conduct another baptism in the city.

My wife and I visited the Zagreb church with Pastor Currie on his 2010 Bible lands tour. The joyous reception from people he had baptised reminded us of the apostle Paul's return visits to churches he had established.

Albania

In 1992 Pastor Currie embarked on pioneering evangelism in Albania, following the collapse of what was probably the harshest Communist dictatorship in Europe. For the previous 40 years all religion had been banned, churches and mosques had been destroyed or taken over for secular purposes, Bibles and other religious books had been destroyed, and people openly practising religion were imprisoned. Currie's evangelistic series in Tiranë, the capital of Albania, opened with packed sessions in the prestigious Congress Theatre, previously accessed only by Communist Party members. His translator had no biblical background, so Currie had to go over the lecture content with her before each session. That year 100 people were baptised in Tiranë and a new church was established.

One of the most remarkable experiences in Albania was Currie's meeting with Meropi Gjika, an 87-year old lady who had maintained her Adventist faith throughout the Communist era, despite opposition from her husband and the danger of detection by the authorities. She had embraced the Adventist



Gaya and David Currie

faith in 1942 through the ministry of Daniel Lewis, an Albanian pharmacist from Boston, USA, who had been invited by the General Conference to preach in Albania. Lewis and his wife were imprisoned and Lewis eventually put to death.

Throughout most of the Communist era Meropi was the only Albanian Adventist. She read the entire Bible every year, and for 45 years regularly placed her tithes and offerings in a biscuit container kept in a wooden suitcase under her bed. She did not bank the money for fear the Communist banks might appropriate it. On at least three occasions family members urged her to lend them money from the biscuit tin, but she refused to let the Lord's money out of her hands.

When Pastor Currie met her in Tiranë in 1992, she gave him her treasured tithes and offerings, overjoyed that her prayers had been answered and that she could finally hand the money over to a minister for use in God's work. The gift totalled \$US533.89 – a remarkable sacrifice, given that she had lived for the previous 20 years on a pension of only \$US4.00 per month. The next day Currie opened the first Adventist Church bank account in Albania with Meropi's gift.

Throughout the Communist era Meropi had been waiting and praying for an ordained Adventist minister to baptise her. She was overjoyed when Pastor Currie baptised her and some of her family. These, along with several other newly baptised people, formed the nucleus of the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Albania. In the following months Pastor Currie established five other churches in the country.

One of the new Albanian church members was Bruna Tawake (nee Hoxholli), who subsequently migrated to Australia and enrolled at Avondale, graduating with a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) degree (with distinction). Bruna has since served as Director of Communications and Public Relations at the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific. In 2005 she accepted an appointment to Avondale as a lecturer in communication and public relations. She has since established her own business as a communication/public relations strategist and consultant while still teaching part-time at Avondale.

During Pastor Currie's years in Britain and Europe, he also ran evangelistic programs in the United Kingdom and Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Hungary, the Ivory Coast and Pakistan.

Administrative roles

In addition to his evangelistic ministry, Pastor Currie has served in numerous senior administrative roles: in the British Union (1975-1979), the North NSW Conference (President, 1980-1985), the South Pacific Division (1985-1989), the Trans-European Division (1989-1994), and the Trans-Australia Union (President, 1995-2001). In most of these appointments he has also served as pastor to the pastors.

Guidance and protection

Over the years Pastor Currie has seen many remarkable instances of God's guidance and protection.

In 1991 he and his wife Gaya were stranded in Croatia at the outbreak of the Balkan War. A line of Serbian tanks was advancing on the capital, and the Croatian borders were closing. David and Gaya tried to get out via Slovenia, trying three different routes to Italy, only to find the borders closed. As they were waiting at the third border, an immaculately dressed man drove up in a prestige car and asked if they were seeking to cross the border. He told them to follow him to a place where they could cross into Italy, telling them that he would turn off just before the border, but that they should continue on. When they arrived at the small border station he disappeared up a dusty side road, and they proceeded through into Italy. They firmly believe that God sent special guidance to bring them to safety.

On another occasion Pastor Currie and another minister were driving through Latvia after an evangelistic series in Estonia. As they slowed for a stop sign at a railway crossing, the trailer with all their evangelistic equipment began dragging along the road. The shafts had cracked on a section of rough road, and had now broken. If this had happened at speed on the highway, evangelistic slides, projectors and screens would have been strewn everywhere. As they were wondering what to do, a man rode up on a bicycle and said that his brother-in-law had an engineering shop at a house only 100 metres back down the road. They were able to wheel the trailer back to the

house, and in 30 minutes the shafts had been re-welded.

Many times in the Curries' ministry things have fallen into place just at the right moment. David and Gaya know from experience that the Lord is able to intervene when and where he wills.

The Lord has also worked in amazing ways with people attending Currie's evangelistic programs. In a series in the Solomon Islands where he preached in English, a group of non-English speakers heard the message in their own language and asked for baptism.

In a series in Melbourne he met a woman who as a girl in Poland many years before had seen in a dream a preacher explaining the Bible in an unfamiliar church. A voice had told her, "You will one day change your church." Years later, after migrating to Australia, she attended Currie's evangelistic program in a Melbourne church. She recognised the preacher and church as the ones she had seen in her dream 40 years before, long before the church had been built. She too was baptised.

Continuing ministry

Though many years into nominal retirement, Pastor Currie is still a man of amazing energy. In 2013 he returned to Croatia, Slovenia and Albania to assist young ministers. Later in the year he presented 22 evangelistic meetings in Thailand. In response to a pressing invitation from Dr Korravich, an Adventist professor of dentistry at Chiang Mai University, the Curries have decided to move to Thailand to head up a Bible school in Chiang Mai. This will be the Curries' 29th home in 58 years of marriage. Evangelism is not easy, especially for spouses and families.

Pastor Currie loves to quote from Paul the apostle, pioneer and exemplar of Christian evangelism: "What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:7-8, NKJV).



David Currie and daughter Althea on a pinnacle above Petra, Jordan. Credit: Wendy Cox

Searchlight on child sponsorship

Brad Watson, senior lecturer in International Poverty and Development Studies in the School of Humanities and Creative Arts, recently launched at Avondale the first-ever scholarly book investigating the quality and efficacy of international child sponsorship programs. Watson is a contributor to almost half the chapters in the book, which he co-edited with his PhD supervisor, Professor Matthew Clarke, Head of Humanities and Social Sciences, Deakin University. With chapters by academics and by staff from some of the world's leading child sponsorship organisations, the book explores the origins of child sponsorship, historic issues in the industry, and changing child sponsorship practices. It is published by Palgrave Macmillan UK.



The efficacy of child sponsorship has been much contested in the humanitarian aid industry, but remains one of the most popular forms of giving to international aid programs. Critics have claimed that privileging one child above others can lead to family and community tensions. It has also been said that sponsorship contributes to dependency without addressing the poverty of the children's families and communities. On the other hand, research at the University of San Francisco has demonstrated the effectiveness of well managed child sponsorship programs in equipping sponsored children to develop into leaders at all levels of society.



Brad Watson speaking at his book launch. Credit: John Cox

Recent decades have seen a strategic shift towards combining child sponsorship with more broadly based development programs aimed at empowering communities to lift out of poverty into self-sustainability. With donors sometimes reluctant to embrace the new direction, donor education has become a priority for child sponsorship organisations.

Watson's book launch featured a panel of four leaders in international development: Professor Alistair Sim of Compassion International, John Hickey of Baptist World Aid, Rebecca Hunter of Asian Aid Australia; and Harwood Lockton, former head of international programs at ADRA Australia.

Lockton stressed the need for "sustainable transformational development" that is owned by communities and that is sensitive to the local culture. Local participation is essential, he said, to determine from the people what the real needs are and to secure the people's agreement on the best methods of addressing those needs. He also highlighted the importance of advocacy to address the root causes of poverty. All the panelists agreed that the focus should be on the beneficiaries more than on the donors.

In 2013 Watson co-authored a refereed article evaluating a Leadership and Good Governance Project by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Nepal.

Other humanities and creative arts publications

Professor Jane Fernandez, Avondale's Vice President (Quality and Strategy), has explored in her writing possibilities for transcending traditional social, cultural and ethnic boundaries. Her chapter in the book *Spirituality in the 21st Century* (Oxford: Interdisciplinary Press, 2013) argues the desirability of opening new vistas of cross-cultural understanding, enabling people to experience spirituality without the traditional prejudices of race, caste and religion. Her chapter in the book *Globalisation: Australian-Asian Perspectives* (2013) explores how the Indian writer Amitav Ghosh interrogates the traditional sanctity of ethnic and national boundaries in favour of a more plural and globalised sense of identity.

Associate Professor Daniel Reynaud has written an important article, "A Christian Ethic for the Arts" in the book *Manifest: Our Call to Faithful Creativity* (Signs Publishing, 2013).

Dr Lindsay Morton, lecturer in English and journalism, published three refereed articles in 2013 and 2014. One of these examined the complexities of representing other cultures in literary journalism. A second examined the truth claims of a work of literary journalism (Dave Cullen's *Columbine*) in view of journalists' responsibility to know their subject well. A third argued that the responsibility of teachers to know their subject well requires honest exploration of alternative perspectives, especially in controversial issues.

The prestigious journal *Ceramics, Art and Perception* is publishing a series of articles by **Tony Martin**, head of the School of Humanities and Creative Arts, based on interviews probing the motivations, inspirations and personal narratives that drive the creativity of leading ceramic artists.

Dr John Skrzypaszek, director of the E G White/SDA Research Centre at Avondale, presented at an international conference in Portugal (2013) a paper, initially written in response to a proposal that Ellen White's Cooranbong home "Sunnyside" might be relocated, arguing that the historic narratives associated with a particular site are an essential aspect of the heritage value of a building.

Lynnette Lounsbury, lecturer in history and communication, is working on a PhD on historical allegory in young adult fiction. In February she launched her first novel *Afterworld* (Allen & Unwin), and has planned a second allegorising the colonisation of Australia.



The book launch panel: L to R: Professor Alistair Sim, Harwood Lockton, Rebecca Hunter, John Hickey. Credit: John Cox

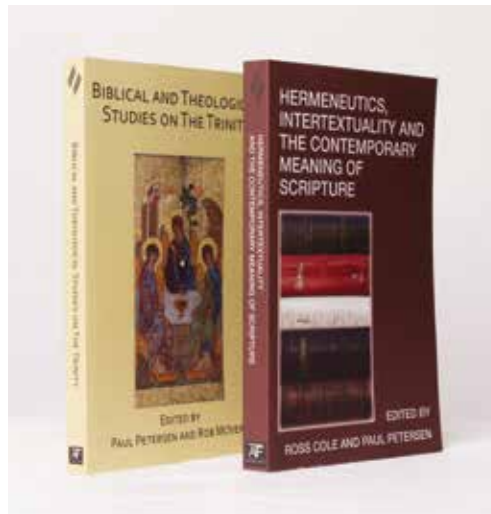
Two new books from Avondale Academic Press John Cox

Avondale Academic Press has released an important book on principles of biblical interpretation (hermeneutics), and a second on the doctrine of the trinity. Both books were co-published with Australia's largest theological publisher, ATF Theology (Australasian Theological Forum), ensuring wide readership.

The hermeneutics book, edited by Dr Ross Cole and Dr Paul Petersen, is a collection of essays originally presented at the 2003 Avondale Bible Conference, which brought together more than 110 scholars, ministers and administrators to discuss matters of biblical interpretation.

Hermeneutics is foundational to biblical studies, but it is also one of the most contested areas. Historical studies have dominated biblical scholarship for many years, but recent decades have seen strong growth in the literary study of the Bible. Numerous contemporary scholars have also seen the biblical texts as sites of social and ideological contest, and have offered readings foregrounding issues of gender, class, race relations and social justice. Reader response theory has led many to privilege the reader above author, text and context. In this controversial space, the contributors to the Avondale volume offer balanced perspectives on a range of interpretative issues. While giving due weight to the historical, social and cultural contexts of the biblical texts, the contributors are eager that Scripture should come alive with significance for contemporary readers.

The essays present a high view of Scripture as the word of God while recognising that biblical writings are mediated through the thought and language of human authors, whose perspectives, emotions, cultural heritage and compositional styles are evident in their work. Yet the biblical texts succeed in their primary purposes – to reveal what God is like, to show



us the way of salvation, to lead us into relationship with God, and to show us the ethical implications of that relationship.

Some contributors to the book observe that our understanding of the Bible is enriched by the variety of insights made available by different readers, each seeing the text from the perspective of her/his individual background and experience. The text itself embodies a range of significations; no one person will plumb all its meaning. But contributors recognise that the meaning of a text is subject to constraints such as the conventions of language, contextual considerations and literary genre, so that it cannot mean whatever the reader wants it to. In the

interaction between reader and text, the contributors take the view, contrary to reader response theory, that the text is the higher authority.

Several contributors consider how issues of intertextuality (the relation of one text to another) impinge on the interpretation of the Bible. Jon Paulien, Richard Davidson and David Thiele explore how New Testament writers use passages from the Old Testament, and how New Testament interpretations of the Old Testament are mediated through the fuller revelation through Jesus Christ. Several contributors explore Ellen White's use of Scripture and the relationship of her writings to the Bible. Robert McIver writes on the interpretation of Jesus' parables. Donna Worley examines historicism as an approach to prophetic interpretation.

This is an important book offering many fruitful insights into the interpretation of the Bible, though one could wish for a chapter exploring the insights available through literary approaches. The contributors have brought to their task a deep respect for Scripture, and their work demonstrates the rewards of reading with an open mind within the framework of faith.

A notable life: Dr Tom Ludowici (1936-2014)



Dr Tom Ludowici and the Bioethics Collection named in his honour. Credit: Ann Stafford

Tom Ludowici grew up in the far west of New South Wales with the ambition of becoming a grazier. He enrolled in accounting at Avondale – to help him better manage a grazing property. At Avondale a vibrant spiritual experience changed the direction of his life, and he realised that God was calling him to gospel ministry. After graduating from theology in 1957, Tom ministered in New Zealand, Western Australia, Darwin, and the United States. Then in 1973 he enrolled at Andrews University, Michigan, where he gained two masters degrees and a Doctorate of Ministry.

On returning to Australia he was appointed senior chaplain at the Sydney Adventist Hospital, a position he held for 14 years. He revolutionised chaplaincy at the Hospital, building a team of highly trained chaplains, establishing a counselling service, and developing the Hospital's in-house TV channel and audio-visual department. Tom led numerous grief and loss workshops, and with his wife Pam developed marriage preparation courses and conducted marriage seminars throughout

Australia and New Zealand.

Between 1986 and 1998 Tom and Dr H E Clifford, General Superintendent of the Hospital, established the Christian Centre for Bioethics to promote discussion of bioethical issues from a Christian perspective. They organised 13 National Christian Bioethics Conferences featuring high-profile international speakers, and developed one of the best-resourced bioethics collections in Australia, with over 7,000 books, 25 regular journals, and online access to electronic resources. The Tom Ludowici Bioethics Collection is now part of the Avondale Library on the Sydney campus.

In 1992 Tom joined the administrative team of the Hospital, serving as Director of Support Services and then Director of Mission, a position he held until his retirement in 2005.

Tom passed away in August 2014. He is remembered as a man of compassion, a loving husband and father, a visionary administrator, and as a pastor with a great love for people and dedication to God.

Homecoming highlights service for others

Homecoming 2014 gave special prominence to alumni who have made a difference through service to others.

Adele Rowden-Johnson, a student of 1964, was honoured as **Alumna of the Year** in recognition of her care for women

and children who have suffered abuse and domestic violence. After 10 years in technical and further education, Adele became managing director in 1997 of the Southlakes Refuge in the Lake Macquarie region of New South Wales. People who come to the refuge have suffered serious abuse, living in



Adele Rowden-Johnson, Alumna of the Year.
Credit: Ann Stafford.

constant fear. They typically experience anger, resentment, low self-esteem and depression. At the refuge they can find safety, receive emotional and physical support, begin to take responsibility for their lives, explore options for change, and by the grace of God find hope for the future. "We're able in a small way to share with others the love given to us by the Lord Jesus," Adele says. She has also served as a member of the Domestic

Violence in Families Taskforce of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Cliff Morgan, a graduate of 1954, was honoured as **Alumnus of the Year** for his self-supported work in raising funds and coordinating volunteers for mission projects in



Cliff Morgan (R) receives the Alumnus of the Year award from Dr Owen Hughes. Credit: Ann Stafford

the Pacific Islands. Having volunteered in Vanuatu and Fiji, at Pacific Adventist University and in Russia, Cliff and his wife Val founded Volunteers in Action in 1996. Through this organisation they sponsor and coordinate national volunteers to grow churches in isolated areas of the Pacific. Another project of Volunteers in Action has been to fund and coordinate the roofing of bush churches with corrugated iron to provide more effective shelter than traditional thatch. The

local people carry out the work and run evangelistic meetings at the same time. In the past 15 years Volunteers in Action has roofed well over 1000 churches. Its various ministries have resulted in over 16,000 baptisms in the South Pacific.

Chris Koelma, a graduate of 2008, was honoured as **Young Alumnus of the Year** for outstanding services to music education, including extended teaching engagements in Argentina and Malaysia.

Alumni representing the seven Homecoming honour years received citations for significant service to community and

church: Pastor David Down (1944), Dr Laurie Draper (1954), Coral Camps (1964), Harvey Carlsen (1974), Mark Vodell (1984), Anthony Hibbard (1994) and Adele Nash (2004).

The choice of **Graeme Frauenfelder** as the Friday evening speaker gave public recognition to his selfless service in bringing joy to people, often in dark places of the earth, through community building, imaginative fun, creativity training and storytelling. Graeme has enriched people's lives in community-building festivals at the past five Olympics, in cross-cultural events in Johannesburg, at a camp for people displaced by the Sichuan earthquake in China, and in creativity training in Zambian villages.

Pastor Glenn Townend, President of the New Zealand-Pacific Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, highlighted love in action in his Sabbath morning message. The Sabbath program also featured overseas service by current Avondale students.

Homecoming featured the music resources of the Avondale Conservatorium, the Institute of Worship and guest musicians, culminating in a concert of Hymns and Songs of Praise hosted by radio and TV presenter Geraldine Doogue.

This year's Homecoming included for the first time a breakfast provided by Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing in the grounds of Ellen White's former home "Sunnyside". The event included tours of "Sunnyside" and the adjacent South Sea Islands Museum.

Homecoming 2015 will feature Avondale students of 2005, 1995, 1985, 1975, 1965, 1955 and 1945. We warmly invite all former students and staff from those and other years.



Harvey Carlsen, Pastor Ray Stanley and Bert Gibbs at the Homecoming breakfast. Credit: Ann Stafford

Connect with Avondale via email

Sending your email address to us at alumni@avondale.edu.au will enable us to give you

- Timely news about Avondale
- Personal invitations to Homecoming and other events

It will also save a lot of paper and postage. We encourage you to send us your email address.

Teacher education initiatives

The School of Education has introduced several new and revised academic programs since the last issue of *Reflections*. Master of Teaching (Primary) and Master of Teaching (Secondary) degrees are now available for people with a relevant prior degree who wish to train as teachers. These 2-year graduate-entry programs replace the previous Bachelor of Teaching programs.

Two new programs offer different routes to the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood). The mainstream program prepares candidates to teach children from very early childhood to Year 6 of primary school. Consequently, this program qualifies graduates to teach either in early learning centres or in primary schools. The second program, available only online, is for people with a diploma in early childhood education who are currently teaching in early learning centres. Graduates from this program are qualified at bachelor degree level to teach children from very early childhood to age 5.

The Master of Education may be studied as a research degree, by coursework, or as a combination of coursework and a project or minor thesis. Specialisations are now available in five areas: education administration, religious education, curriculum and teaching studies, TESOL (Teaching English as a Second or Other Language), and special education. Increasing numbers of candidates are opting for the Master of Education (Research).

The School of Education also now offers a range of workshops and short professional development courses for practising teachers. Short courses are available in information and communication technologies, special needs, primary curriculum, faith and learning, early childhood education, leadership, physical education, outdoor education, and more.

Online delivery

While face-to-face learning and teaching has been desirable for the optimum teacher education experience, the School of Education has introduced blended learning into many of its units. These experiences provide online delivery options for both on-campus and distance students and provide new and innovative learning experiences for students. Online delivery of early childhood education programs is being rolled out, as is the online delivery of the Bachelor of Education (Primary). The Master of Teaching degrees are now available in both on-campus and distance modes. Fifty per cent of the Master of Education (Coursework) units offered in 2014 are available online, and in time most units in this program will be online.

Staffing

Since our last report three new staff have joined the School of Education. Dr Sherry Hattingh came from a career in primary education. At the end of 2013 she completed a Doctor of Education degree researching pedagogical responses



Dr Sheree Hattingh

to internationalisation at a faith-based secondary school. Kevin Petrie came to Avondale from school principalship in New Zealand. He recently completed a Doctor of Education degree with a thesis on the relationship between student-peer bullying, school climate and peer popularity. Gail Ormsby teaches in the Technical and Applied Studies (TAS) key learning area, lecturing in textiles and food and nutrition. She has previously worked with Sanitarium, ADRA and CBM Australia. She has written a number of peer-reviewed papers on health issues in developing countries, and is currently completing a PhD with the University of Melbourne.



Dr Kevin Petrie

Avondale mainstream in teacher education

Avondale is perceived as part of the mainstream of teacher education in New South Wales. Associate Professor Peter Beamish, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Science, is secretary of the NSW Council of Deans of Education and a member of the Australian Council of Deans of Education. He sits on the NSW Initial Teacher Education Committee (ITEC), which oversees and develops policy relating to the accreditation of initial teacher education programs in the state. He is on the Council of Deans and Education Sectors, which considers education issues spanning public, Catholic and independent education sectors at school and university levels. He was also involved with a Commonwealth working party developing threshold standards for masters degrees in teacher education.

TEACH Journal of Christian Education

Avondale's *TEACH Journal of Christian Education* is distributed to every teacher and administrator in Christian schools in Australia, including the Adventist school system, and to the leading Christian educators of other denominations. The journal is highly regarded, many schools using it for the professional development of their teachers. The research articles in the journal are peer reviewed. Numerous articles are by international authors.



Gail Ormsby (L) with textiles students Annali Baxter (C) and Kim Ninness (R). Credit: Jared Poland

Education research benefits teachers and students

An article in the current issue of *TEACH Journal of Christian Education* identifies several ways in which research by practising teachers can enhance teaching and learning. The article was co-authored by two of Avondale's leading educators, Professor Anthony Williams, Vice President (Academic and Research), and Dr Peter Kilgour, head of the School of Education. The following survey of education research by Avondale staff in 2013-2014 gives weight to their conclusions.

Transmission of values

The transmission of values is at the heart of Christian education. Bev Christian has published an article on preparing pre-service teachers to transmit positive values in the school classroom. Barbara Fisher has written on strategies to introduce beginning readers to the Bible. Sandra Ludlow has written on fostering young children's spiritual awareness and relationship with God. Fisher's and Ludlow's papers were published in *Exploring and Engaging Spirituality for Today's Children* (Wipf and Stock, 2014). Dr Barry Gane, head of the School of Ministry and Theology, published an article on values transmission in the Adventist school system. Associate Professor Phil Fitzsimmons, Edie Lanphar and Dr Barry Hill co-authored a chapter in *Spirituality in the 21st Century* (Oxford: Interdisciplinary Press, 2013) evaluating the development of spiritual awareness in a school chaplaincy program. Dr Kevin Petrie wrote an article showing that schools with a positive school climate have a lower incidence of bullying.

Multicultural education

At a time when schools are becoming increasingly multicultural, several staff members have written about cultural awareness. Dr Peter Kilgour investigated growth in cultural awareness in pre-service teachers studying a unit in multiculturalism and indigenous studies. Jason Hinze and Phil Fitzsimmons published an article documenting the value of overseas pre-service professional experience in developing skills and understandings transferable into domestic teaching practice. Fitzsimmons co-authored an article investigating the skills and knowledge needed by pre-service teachers to function in and benefit from overseas professional experience. Fitzsimmons, Dr Andrew Matthes, Jason Hinze and Lorinda Bruce co-authored with Barbara McKenzie (University of Wollongong) a chapter in *Space and Place* (Interdisciplinary Press, 2013) on culture shock encountered by pre-service teachers engaged in overseas professional experience.

Modes of learning and teaching

Kilgour and Fitzsimmons investigated the benefits of blended learning involving online and face-to-face components. Kilgour and Bev Christian co-authored with researchers from Charles Sturt University and the University of Sydney an article arguing for greater rigour in the assessment of work-integrated learning. Jody Lawson and Dr Marion Shields (2014) published an article on the importance of transition programs to assist high school students with disabilities to bridge the gap between school and work, further education, and community participation.

Teaching in specific disciplines

Barbara Fisher and Dr Merle Cozens published an analysis of Fisher's research on the canine-assisted reading program called BaRK (Building Reading Confidence for Kids). Fisher also wrote a chapter about her BaRK research in the book *Dogs That Make a Difference* (Penguin 2014). Fitzsimmons co-edited a book entitled *Spectrums and Spaces of Writing* (Interdisciplinary Press, 2013) exploring critical concepts of writing in specific disciplines. Brianna Cameron, Gail Ormsby and Peter Kilgour (2014) published an article on the teaching of textile technology to Year 7 classes. Associate Professor Kevin de Berg presented a paper, published in the refereed proceedings of an international conference at Pittsburg, Ohio (2013), on the implications for chemistry education of an aspect of the chemistry practice of pioneering 18th-century chemist Antoine Lavoisier. Dr Jason Morton has added to the scientific knowledge available to biology teachers in a paper on rocky reef fish assemblages in an estuary with a restricted inlet, and in another, co-authored with Professor Brian Timms (University of NSW) and Ken Green (National Parks and Wildlife Service) on changes over time in the macroinvertebrate fauna of two glacial lakes in the Snowy Mountains.



Barbara Fisher and Sandra Ludlow with the book containing their papers. Credit: Brenton Stacey

Work-integrated learning through international experience

Professional experience in a variety of workplace contexts is an essential component of many higher education programs today. Several Avondale programs give students the opportunity to undertake professional placements abroad. Students grow professionally through the challenge and rewards of working in unfamiliar and at times demanding cross-cultural environments.

Ministry of Teaching Overseas

Teacher education students, guided by accompanying lecturers, undertook professional experience placements this year in India, Nepal and Cambodia.



A Bible lesson at AoZora. Credit: Andrew Matthes

In India the students worked at the AoZora School in the Bihar province north of Kolkata, one of the poorest areas in the country. The classrooms at AoZora have stark cement walls and brick floors. Barefooted students, their clothes held together with safety pins, sit on the floor with slates and chalk. There are no desks, chairs or data projectors. To this environment, the Avondale students brought up-to-date teaching methods, giving fresh excitement and colour to the learning experience of students who had never before known coloured pencils. They also gave the children Hindi Bibles and talked with them about Jesus. Dr Andrew Matthes, who accompanied the students, mentored the school staff in effective teaching practices. At weekends the Avondale students painted the bare classroom walls, and made a garden and chicken coop to help the school's finances.

Avondale teacher education students have visited AoZora for several years, during which time a growing Christian presence has developed in this bastion of Buddhism, close to the town where Gautama Buddha is said to have received his initial enlightenment. In the past year 500 people have been baptised, and a company of believers now meets each Sabbath at the school.

Teacher education students also undertook supervised professional experience at the Three Angels Mission School in Pokhara, Nepal, and at the Wat Preah Yesu orphanage in Siem Reap, Cambodia. In Nepal the students taught six days



AoZora dormitory accommodation. Credit: Andrew Matthes

a week and presented a worship service on Saturday. They also presented a week of prayer, ran a children's club and renovated the house of the school's cleaner.

Nursing students visit the Solomon Islands

Nine final-year nursing students, led by lecturer Kerry Miller, undertook a two-week clinical learning experience at the Atoifi Hospital in the Solomon Islands, gaining an introduction to medical-focused mission in a developing country. They received a broad clinical experience, treating patients with machete wounds, malaria, severe burns, and ulcerated wounds from insect or snake bites. They also rose to the challenge of providing effective nursing care with limited facilities and equipment.

Theology students gain cross-cultural experience

Ministry and theology students conducted five evangelistic series in the Solomon Islands, resulting in 172 baptisms and 311



Baptism in Malaysia

decisions for baptism. Students also presented four evangelistic series in Malaysia as part of an evangelistic outreach led by Pastor Vadim Butov of the Avondale Memorial Church. Ministry and theology students are now required to undertake at least one cross-cultural mission experience.

Study project in Nepal

Nine International Poverty and Development Studies students, accompanied by senior lecturer Brad Watson, visited 19 districts in Nepal to monitor and evaluate ADRA projects in fulfilment of the practical requirements of one of their study units. Their reports joined a large body of research to be presented to the British government's UK Aid program, with millions of dollars of funding at stake. "We were irresistibly drawn to the people of Nepal," said student Joshua Page, "and challenged by the issues many of them face."



A small business owner in Nepal teaches Emma McCrow to use a manual sewing machine. Credit: Alexandra Radovan.

Student mission projects make a difference

Avondale student organisation One Mission continues to inspire students with a vision of service to some of the poorer parts of the world. In the past year 64 students have undertaken mission trips to the Philippines, Brazil and Cambodia under the One Mission umbrella.

Building project completed in the Philippines

Twenty-seven students completed the construction of a new classroom, a covered learning area and a games court for an Adventist elementary school in the Philippines. The group also funded the first six months' salary for a new teacher. One Mission teams have worked on these projects for the past four years, raising \$70,000 to support their efforts. They have also run kids' programs in the afternoons, evangelistic programs in the evenings, feeding programs in the local community, and programs for students at a public high school. Their evangelistic programs have produced more than 100 baptisms.



Constructing a games court for a school in the Philippines. Credit: Simon Gigliotti

This year's team conducted an "Empower Hour" in a local secondary school, giving high school students the message that "you are capable in Christ of achieving amazing things, making a difference in your community." The team engaged local high school students in the kids' club, the feeding program and the school building project, giving the local teenagers a taste of the satisfaction that comes from working for the good of others.

The Avondale students grew in faith and maturity as they coped with the challenges of another culture, the language barrier, and getting on with others in poor and crowded living conditions. Team leader Joel Slade said: "One Mission trips have taken me out of my comfort zone to a place where I'm able to challenge myself and see God working in my life. I've seen myself grow."

Sanitation for Amazon villages

For the past three years, One Mission teams from Avondale have partnered in an ADRA project to improve hygiene and sanitation in remote Amazon villages where water-borne diseases are a major cause of illness and death. The teams have completed 49 toilets, a classroom and a health clinic, and have educated the people in hygiene, bringing significant health benefits. The students on this year's trip raised \$35,000 for building supplies, as well as \$5,000 each for airfares and other expenses.

The One Mission teams have earned the respect and admiration of local people. Adjacent districts have appealed to ADRA to conduct similar projects in their areas, the mayors of two of these districts offering financial support for ADRA to work in their communities.

Mission trips such as these have real challenges. The Amazon is infested with alligators and pirana fish. There are dangers from snakes, ants and malaria-bearing mosquitoes. There are the challenges of living in primitive conditions, cop-



Elise Jakupec, Emily Dehn and Chloe Brees build a toilet for an Amazon village. Credit: Mae Selidlo

ing with an unfamiliar diet, and managing tiredness. And there are dangers from the tools the group uses, such as chainsaws and machetes. The Avondale groups have been most thankful for God's protection, with no serious injuries or illnesses.

"One Mission trips work positive changes in the lives of many participants, and motivate students for future leadership roles," said group leader Odailson (Dada) Fialho.

Who would have imagined?

The call to ministry is rarely predictable. This is the story of three people who scarcely imagined earlier in their lives that today they would be studying for the ministry.

Maika Peehikuru grew up in a family with a single mother who had tried to rear him as a Seventh-day Adventist. But he never really connected with the church, and in his teens rebelled. During his late high school and university years he became heavily involved in drugs, alcohol and gangs. Lured by the power and mystery of the supernatural, he became deeply involved in the occult, where he was taught to hate God and despise Christians, and was influenced to follow his ancestral Maori cultural heritage and all the spiritual connotations associated with it. But God had



Maika Peehikuru

Empowering villagers in Cambodia

Ten students, including one from Avondale's Sydney campus, worked with the local people in a village in Cambodia to construct a hydroponic system for lettuce and other vegetables, to enhance the community's self-sufficiency in food and income. Eighty per cent of the produce will be sent to market. The local people also worked with the Avondale group to construct a shed for goats and a toilet to improve village sanitation. The students made special efforts to build relationships with the community. "It was important," said team leader Jordan Hutchinson, "for the local people to own and take responsibility for the project."

"Working in a poverty-stricken environment changes your attitude to life," he said. "Students in the group developed spiritually and discovered a commitment to mission." Many students returning from mission trips continue to seek service opportunities, often in leadership roles. The Cambodia experience motivated one team member, a student from the United States, to return to Avondale next year. Team leader Jordan Hutchinson has been to Cambodia six times on development and aid projects, and would eventually like to work there.



Kierstin Beach, Alyse Hunter and Crystal Jolly at work in Cambodia. Credit: Jordan Hutchinson

something else in mind.

On finishing university Maika embarked on a successful career as a business and IT professional. But he also felt an empty space in his life. "Sometimes when you're in darkness, Jesus shows up," he says. This began to happen when he took employment with a Christian organisation. Staff were expected to attend worship each morning. At first he resisted this, but gradually he became impressed with the caring attitude of people in the organisation. Here he met the person who was later to become his wife. "She was an example of the love and peace of Christianity," he said, "and I felt I wanted to be like her."

Underneath his respectable exterior, Maika had the potential from time to time to be like a sleeping volcano that could erupt if he was provoked to anger. One day as he set out to exact violent vengeance on someone who had wronged him, God miraculously intervened. His rage suddenly abated, and he sensed Jesus speaking to his mind, though not audibly, saying, "I am here." A feeling of peace and rationality pervaded his being, and he knew in that moment that he would

never be the same again.

His mother was overjoyed when he told her of the experience, and with her encouragement he began to read the Bible and Ellen White's books. As he read he found peace and comfort. One day he decided to go to church, and was strongly moved by the sermon about relationship with God. The church people accepted him warmly, and ultimately he decided to be baptised.

As his relationship with Jesus deepened, he wanted to share his faith with the people he knew, including his occult friends, one of whom became a Christian as a result of Maika's witness. This man had discovered that he was free from disturbing supernatural manifestations whenever he came into Maika's office, and Maika was able to lead him to faith in the God who has power to defeat the forces of evil.

In time Maika sensed that God was calling him to ministry. "God gave me a new heart, and a heart for people," he said. He is now at Avondale in his final year of preparation for ministry. While at Avondale he has assisted in ministry at the Wyeec Seventh-day Adventist Church. "Study at Avondale has been challenging," he added, "but I have loved the course, and am now a more balanced and wholistic person than before."

Alex Green grew up in a devout family in a mainstream religion, but in high school he was teased for attending church and was bullied by other boys. He was a keen sportsperson, playing AFL football at state level. But the dominant sports code at the school was rugby league, and AFL players were given a hard time. He was intensely unhappy, and would sometimes come home in tears. He struggled to understand how God would allow all this to happen to him.



Alex Green

His family, who lived on the NSW Central Coast, felt that a change of school was needed, and decided to try the Avondale High School where some family friends had sent their children. Here Alex found friends whose actions showed him a Jesus full of grace and mercy. The seed planted in his heart grew and matured over the next couple of years, and his parents were pleased that their son had found happiness and purpose in life.

When Alex was in upper high school, an Adventist youth pastor invited him to commence Bible studies. He became convicted that he could serve only one God and that he needed to keep the Sabbath, both of which cut across his passion for AFL football. "It was tough giving up football," he said, "but I know I have made the right decision." He started attending the Adventist church, was baptised, and began to discover a growing desire to share his faith with others.

Although numerous career options were available to him when he finished high school, he felt a strong call to ministry

that led him to enrol at Avondale. His parents were at first reluctant about his call to ministry. They advised him to study something else first, so that he would have a qualification if ever he changed his mind about ministry. But they have since been very supportive, happy that he has found a satisfying relationship with Jesus and a fulfilling career path.

Alex is now completing his third year of study for the ministry. He has thoroughly enjoyed the course, which has affirmed the importance of his calling. He currently does 15 hours of ministry each week at the Toronto Church, and is looking forward to full-time ministry.

Jack Ryder grew up in a non-Christian family, where he was raised to believe that Christianity was "a bit of a joke." His goal was to be "the average guy on the street, smoking pot occasionally." When he was expelled from school, the Adventist school was the only one in the district that would accept him. There he was impressed with people's care, love and acceptance. But change did not come easily. After one episode of serious misbehaviour, the principal said to him, "Do you know what grace is?" The discovery of grace in action led him to fall in love with Jesus, and his life was gradually transformed. His mother at first opposed the idea of his baptism, but eventually consented, thinking it would only be a passing phase. But as time went on she could see the positive changes in his life, and came to accept and encourage the new direction.

"Today I have a burning in my heart to spread God's love," he says – a passion that has led him to Avondale, where he is now completing the second year of study for the ministry. The journey has not been easy, because he is dyslexic and finds reading difficult. But with prayer and perseverance he is slowly overcoming this disability, scoring two high distinctions last semester. He particularly enjoys the practical ministry components of the course, and hopes to use the things he is learning to help him reach family and friends back home.



Jack Ryder

We invite our readers to pray for these students and their lecturers, and for all who are studying at Avondale. Many of our students have discovered God's intervention in their lives through the influence of other Christians.

