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Australian Indigenous Ministries

Nov 2014-Jan 2015



AIM Adventures see pages 3 and 6

Our God is Able



Ministry, Motoring & medical

by Deb McKerrell

Our mission/ministry trip began this year with a Kid' Program at the Corella Creek Easter Convention in the Barkly area. After this we made a short detour back to Camooweal for fellowship with *Jono and Grace Wright*.

Bob and I then travelled south past Tennant Creek, east through the beautiful Davenport Ranges, and onto Canteen Creek to visit *Richard and Sue Davies*. During our visit we were able to run a Kid's Program, share in RE and attend the Bible studies. It was a very busy time but we thoroughly enjoyed it.

From there we were heading to Elliott which is 2 ½ hours north of Tennant. We filled up with diesel in Tennant and 100 kms north our truck just stopped! This was Friday morning.

Bob worked out that the problem was water in the diesel — lots of it! It had blocked the injectors and fuel pump and we could go nowhere. So there we sat until a truckie towed us to a safer spot on the other side of the highway. We were in a complete dead zone — no mobile phone or internet coverage. We had to rely on people who stopped to take a message through to *Harold and Kaye Dalywaters* in Elliott.

Our girls were trying to find out what happened to us, as we had planned to contact them via Skype on Friday night. Sunday morning — what a very welcome sight! Harold and Kaye arrived in a borrowed vehicle and they ended up towing us to Elliott.

While we couldn't get out to any other communities, we were very grateful to be in Elliott and to later receive a Sat phone to give us coverage everywhere!

After a month, our vehicle was finally towed to Darwin. We expected it would take a month or so to repair, but no, it was gone for over 4 months! We wondered at times what God's purpose was, but we had to just stay close to Him knowing that He is always in control. Our Bible reading for the day when the truck went to Darwin was Romans 8:28!

God was very good to us in providing two borrowed vehicles during the time we were stranded. This allowed us to pick up folk for church and kids for Sunday school, get to the post office — things we can easily take for granted.

All in all our time in Elliott this year was very profitable with Sunday school each week as well as Bible study and Sunday night Church. We were able to show a complete DVD series through the Gospels and Acts in Kriol and English in both Elliott and Marlinja.



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At long last the call came in '*the truck is fixed and ready to go*'. On 2nd October Bob and a good friend picked it up. He said the 740 kms back to Elliott was a '*dream run*' as the truck ran like a clock.

This ordeal has been such a long journey, and we are very thankful that it is over!

In the middle of all of that, I had a fall that meant we had a couple of trips to Katherine to visit the chiropractor. Nothing like an 800km round trip to see one! There was no resolution so I eventually flew to Brisbane to see my own physicians and was away over 6 weeks. The up side was I got to spend time with our daughter Linda who was home briefly from ministry in Taiwan, and also with our grandson and his parents.

There was no real resolution so I flew back to Darwin and Bob came up to meet me. The pain continued disabling me until I had another fall! This relieved the original pain, but I still have a very sore back and wonder when God will say '*enough*'.

Our trip back home to Toowoomba will be slower than usual as I cannot sit for long periods of time. But God willing, we will be back in Elliott sometime next year.



by Jenni Alley

We are grateful to God for this year being a good year for our tours, with three groups heading out to our AIM Centres across Australia. Additionally, in July, we helped as a family with the driving and cooking in our own Northern Territory workers Tagalong Tour to Lawn Hill and Lorella Springs. This was a wonderful time of fellowship and AIM team bonding!

Our first team in April was a group brought together from Wagga Wagga, Brisbane, Central Coast & Taree. Something special about this group was seeing team members long affiliated (and not so long!) with the work of AIM find great joy in making tangible links with the work and developing their passion for what God is doing in the Outback.

Our second team was with Baulkham Hills Chinese Alliance Church in Sydney. This group was mostly second generation young Chinese people, led by their African Pastor — a real cross-cultural tour! It was a thrill to take this group out to Western NSW and expose them to God's work in these centres. They were an energetic and joyful bunch and we enjoyed their fellowship.

Our third team was a group from Caringbah Baptist Church in Sydney. This church has been travelling to Borroloola for the last 3 years with the purpose of partnering and encouraging the church mob there. It was, once again, a great time and we pray that this link will continue and be glorifying to God in growing the Indigenous church.

At this stage we have four tours happening in 2015 with a potential spot for a fifth tour later in the year. Please keep this ministry in your prayers!



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Borrooloola blessings

by Miriam Charlie

We look back on 2014 and are so happy for how God has blessed us here at Borrooloola Community Church.

The Corella Creek mob had an Easter Convention. We were able to go and we all really enjoyed the fellowship with them and also with our brothers and sisters who came from Tennant Creek. There were nine people baptised over the weekend and some of them were from here. Some other people gave their hearts to the Lord.

One lady from Borrooloola came back to the Lord at the Convention. A few of us visited her and the other locals who became Christians at the Convention. We spent time encouraging them and giving them some Bible teaching. She tells a story of how God has helped her along this narrow road. She loves reading her Bible even though she never went to school. She says our Lord has shown her how to read His Word.

Vincent Charlie and I went by bus into Katherine one week. Rhonda Coats met us and helped us try and get the signatures changed on our bank account. She took us out to meet Jocelyn and Anita at Barunga. After Rhonda introduced us she went visiting while we shared our stories and news of our churches with one another. We were so happy to finally meet them. We sang songs and prayed together. There was the biggest rain! Then when we walked out of the church we saw this beautiful bright rainbow God put right across the whole sky. We just felt so blessed in our hearts and felt that God was happy with our time together too.

One night we joined the Katherine Christians at their Bible study. It was a real lovely time having fellowship with them. Our hearts were very encouraged. We talked about getting together again later on but that hasn't happened yet.

The Lake Nash Church came to us in early May to do a play about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. They came with Paul Johnson, but it was their own idea to come. It was so good to have the Lake Nash Christians



come to us. We were very encouraged by the play and very challenged too that they would come all that way to a place they didn't know so they could tell others about the Lord Jesus. It has made us think hard about how we need to think of others and go out to them with the Good News.

Later on Paul Johnson brought another mob out here from a Church in Victoria. One girl was very convicted when she heard Vincent talk about how some people get baptised then turn away from following the Lord. When that group went somewhere else on their trip she got baptised!

The Caringbah Baptist group came out to us again this year. They seemed to have a happy time sharing with us in our meetings. They had a special meeting for kids one night.

Every Sunday night we go out and have an outreach service in one of the camps around Borrooloola. This is a good way to get God's Word out to our people. One young girl said that after our service in her camp she had a real good rest that night. Before that she had been very troubled in her heart.

Please pray for us. Pray that all us Christians will stay strong and keep going properly for our Lord and pray that many others will trust in our Lord too.



Remembering **Betty Long**

Hospitable, resilient, courageous, adventurous, lover of music, teacher, mentor. These were some of the descriptions that flowed through the tributes at the memorial service for *Betty Long* who went to be with her Lord on October 1st. She was 93.

Betty grew up in the USA. Her love of music began early when she learned to play the piano at age 8. She enjoyed participating in a wide spectrum of music — from playing piano and brass instruments, singing in choirs and conducting music, to leading the Singleton Bible Institute Choir and eventually leading the large CWCI Choir in the Sydney Opera House. Whatever she was doing musically (and in many other spheres), her vibrancy and passion always came through.

She grew up attending church and Sunday school and came to a personal faith in Jesus Christ in her early teens. After graduating from High School her father pleaded with her to attend Moody Bible Institute for a year before going to the college of her choice. He actually wouldn't pay for anything else until she did!

While at Moody she met *Ed Long* and on 14 February 1942 they were married. It was to be a 72 year example of a beautiful Christ-centred marriage, always with the other's best interest at heart, and a true partnership in ministry. They always respected, encouraged and supported one another, especially in the use of their gifts and abilities which dovetailed and complemented one another beautifully.

In 1945 she left her home, family, and friends for far off Australia to join AIM with her husband and 3 month old daughter *Retta*. Throughout the years she showed great resilience as she transitioned into all the changes and new things with energy and commitment.

Their first assignment was to Cummeragunja. Their faith was tested when baby Retta became ill. It was a 100 km. trip to the hospital in a 40+ degree heat wave. The diagnosis of scarlet fever, whooping cough, and pneumonia must have been devastating — especially to Betty being so far from family and home. What could be done? The doctor's reply — '*Get this hot weather changed*'. They prayed earnestly and suddenly a cool breeze began and the temperature started dropping — and so did Retta's!

Sometime after this the Longs went to Singleton Bible

Institute for seven years. *Helen and John* were born during this time. Betty lectured and mentored, was a secretary for Ed, and she provided much hospitality. Reflecting on Singleton days she said, '*The students made much progress spiritually as well as in many other ways. This was what we wanted most of all for them — a deeper experience of Christ.*'

In 1953 Ed was appointed Director and remained so until 1972. Betty always worked alongside him, supporting, teaching, and encouraging not only others but Ed as well.

Meeting new people and hearing their story was something Betty loved. The family recalls how they '*daily had people in our home intersecting with the fabric of our lives*'. Through her hospitality she created the space for everyone to open up and she lovingly kept them within her sphere of influence. She wanted people to know that God had not forgotten them and that He always cared for them.

Betty was able to hand a situation or concern over to the Lord and not worry about the outcome. She said '*this can free us to move forward in our lives with the knowledge that God is in control and we can trust that we will be looked after. By doing this, we have victory over our circumstances as we wait patiently for a resolution.*'

Her granddaughter shared, '***She was a grandmother to dozens — mentor to hundreds — and an inspiration to thousands.***'

Thank you Lord, for the life and faithfulness of Betty Long.





Tagalong tour

Instead of a conference the NT workers were joined by a few Council members and others for a team-building Tagalong Tour in July. They jumped into the MAT bus or their own 4 wheel drive for 10 days of bulldust, river crossings, camping and enjoying beauty spots at Lawn Hill Qld and Lorella Springs NT. The cold dry season evenings were spent sharing about the work and doing a bit of team building around the campfire.



Flat tyre on last day!





Dubbo doings



David

by David Cox

We have much to be thankful for here in Dubbo. Our congregation is a devoted group who work to see the gospel going out. As a result there are several events worth noting.

The first is a twice yearly One Day Conference, or Day in the Word. This is an intensive time of study involving

four sessions of 40 minutes each with a 20 minute break between each. We begin at 10 am and conclude about 1:40 pm with a late lunch. These have been well received and our next one in February, will be our sixth.

Steve Bignall shared the teaching sessions with me at the August Conference. It was good to have Henry Louie from Gilgandra, Phil and Fiona Spears from Mullaley and also Rhonda Coats from Darwin join the good number from Dubbo who attended.

Each year we share a ladies' conference with the Gilgandra church. This year it was held in Dubbo. Narelle Gatenby spoke on Habakkuk. Many ladies were challenged and helped as they considered faith under fire and other topics.

Some of our young men are taking part in a program in which they give short talks on a chosen topic. The aim is to get the men studying and give them a chance

to develop skills in preaching and developing sermons. The church members have been especially encouraging with this and there are some useful preachers emerging.

One area that is lacking is a specialised children's ministry. While our children are not neglected, there is a need to begin something aimed specifically at them.

Please remember Dubbo in your prayers — especially our conferences, our up and coming preachers and our children.



Steve



Gourmet meals enjoyed on Tagalong Tour



Droving for Jesus

by Grace Wright

The Christians at Camooweal Qld and surrounding NT Communities had an awesome opportunity again this year of taking part in the annual Drovers Festival. We were loaned a truck to use as a float in the street parade. Being a pretty small group of Christians here in Camooweal it was great to have some Christian men from places down the Sandover Hwy come to help us.

They are very gifted with music and played gospel songs from the back of the truck as it went up and down the street lined with tourists, locals and old drovers. They also helped with music at the church service on the Sunday at the Drovers Camp. There was a good crowd there and Jono shared from a psalm about David the shepherd/drover and David's thoughts on God and His creation.

We thank God for this unique opportunity of witnessing.



Back to Brisbane

Former worker *Elizabeth Ham* recently moved back to Brisbane. She went to the Territory in 1974 to minister in Tennant Creek. In 1986 she moved to the Bible College, then into Darwin to carry out her effective and appreciated ministry. This has been scaling back since her retirement from AIM in 2009. She is currently with family until she is able to find and settle into her own accommodation. Her current address is: 3 Amaray Dr, Upper Coomera Qld 4209



Elizabeth with former workers Merv and Lelean Pattemore whom she has known since arriving in the Territory



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