

# the aim

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Australian Indigenous Ministries

May-July 2015



**A Leader in Katherine — Lisa Mumbin**  
see article pages 4-5





**Cherbourg Church**

# looking forward in **cherbourg**

by Christine Moses

**A**unty Ruth Hegarty grew up in Cherbourg. She was one of the 'dormitory girls' and attended AIM Sunday School and Church. She is now a member at Northeast Baptist Church in Nundah. In late March she and the leaders from that church met with us at Cherbourg. It was very encouraging to have them visit and discuss some forward looking plans with us.

One of the areas they have said they are willing to assist us is in our programs for the young people. They believe they have human resources that will enrich and enhance our ongoing programs with them. Together with the AIM Church members they have agreed to start off with the week long school holiday program in July. We are really looking forward to their help and input with this ministry program this year!

For a long time now the need of a new church building here in Cherbourg has been prayed for by our elders and members. The current building has a major problem with white ants. It is also difficult for our older folk to manage getting into the upstairs building as well as other problems and shortcomings. After liaising with the Cherbourg Council, the church members have been thinking of the new church building. At the end of last year the whole membership agreed to go forward about this need. We

took it to the QCC meeting and they are in favour of us moving forward to build a new church.

We have been praying for finance and human resources while awaiting the lease from the Cherbourg Council. It was good to have the folk from Nundah here so we could share our concerns with them. We appreciate their prayers and suggestions.

Aunty Ruth recalled that she was a young girl when she saw older men build the current church. She is believing now that we should move forward for a new church for the new generation — and one that will be accessible for the older ones too. They prayed with us — and we ask you to join us too in praying for the local Cherbourg Council to catch the vision and move forward with us for a new church.

In February the Church asked us to stay here in ministry for another three years and we have accepted to do so. We have been encouraged and blessed by the involvement of Church members in preaching and leading in different ministries. Even when we were away for a couple of weeks a few committed members and youth totally ran the children's street outreach ministries.

***We look to God for His continued guidance for us all as we move forward with Him.***



**Christine, Narelle Boney, Ruth Hegarty, Willie Moses**

rocky report

# may 2015

by Jandalyn Mitchell

**2014 was a year of miracles, blessings, and great rejoicing. OUR GOD IS AN AWESOME GOD.**

**R**ocky Church was blessed with a number of **VISITORS** last year. Several from God Squad motorcycle group came along and they all felt at home with us. They said they were glad that they now have a church to come back to when passing through. *Pastor Willie and Sister Christine Moses* visited from Cherbourg — they enjoyed joining into our morning prayer group before our Sunday morning service. *Pastor Emmanuel and Sister Agnes Fave* came to share with the Rocky mob — and found they also had a divine appointment to meet with our dear *Sister Rhonda Coats*. They can all now put faces to one another's names! They were able to share together and with us about training. AIMCC chairman *Pastor Apenisa and Sister Lolou* also visited. They blessed us not only with their visit but also brought along a group of Fijian singers. It was a lovely time having them all here.

**PRAYER and PRAISE:** *Faye Chambers* has made a big recovery after her heart attack — still amazes family, friends and doctors. Thank you all for your prayers for Faye and her husband *David* who is now her full time carer.

*Mannie Cressbrook* suffered a severe stroke in January. He is home and on the mend though still doing rehab twice a week. He came home from hospital rejoicing that he could

walk a little without help. He has been concerned about being able to continue on with his outreach ministry in some of the parks of Rockhampton. Please pray for him, and for those he longs to reach with the message of God's love and forgiveness.

We are excited that our younger ones are now partaking in the church services. This is a real encouragement for all of us who have been in the church for a long time and we trust it will help the younger ones to grow stronger as they begin to share the blessing of serving the Lord in the church.

**We would value your prayers for our church leaders *David Chambers, Lesley Power and myself.***

In early May the Rockhampton AIM Church will be hosting both a Men's and Ladies convention.

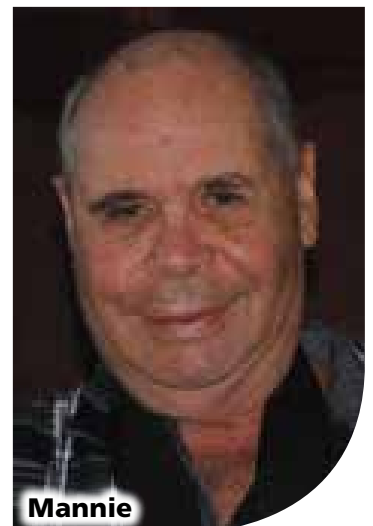
**Please pray that many will gather with us from the other Qld. Churches and that it will be a rich time of fellowship for all believers.**



Jandalyn



David and Faye



Mannie



# a leader in katherine

**W**OW — Lisa Mumbin has recently been to London! She was there by invitation to the WOW — 'Women of the World' — Festival of which the Duchess of Cornwall is President. It is a gathering where inspirational women from all walks of life from many countries speak and share their stories, and draw encouragement from the achievements of one another. Back home in Katherine she has shown the current and previous Governor General around during official visits through her dual role as Chairperson of Jawoyn Association and President of Kalano Community.

During her growing up years, Lisa lived at Rockhole Community about 15km out of Katherine. The late Stephen Watson whom every child respectfully referred to as grandfather, got it set up as an 'alcohol free' Community — the first one to do so in Katherine.

On Sunday mornings young and old would gather under the shade of trees as he led them in a time of singing and Bible reading. Lisa also remembers missionaries in Katherine, and when in town she often attended Church and Sunday school with her mum at the Bethel Church, now called Katherine AIM.

*She shares: For 11 years the doors of the town church were closed. We were kind of lost. People from other churches would come around and offer us lifts and encourage us to join with them but we kept refusing.... and waiting. It was like someone was holding us, protecting us, waiting for the right time. As I have often told people from my experience, God's timing is perfect.*

*In 1998 Katherine was hit with a big flood. This scared many people, and more than ever we all was looking for the church to open.*

*Then in His right time, God sent Greg and Debbie Piper*





they were caretakers and then they re-opened the church. My mum & families attended, then she said we should all go along, so one Sunday my husband Noel and I went and sat in the back row. God began working in our hearts that very morning. We became committed, then baptised, and later were made Church leaders.

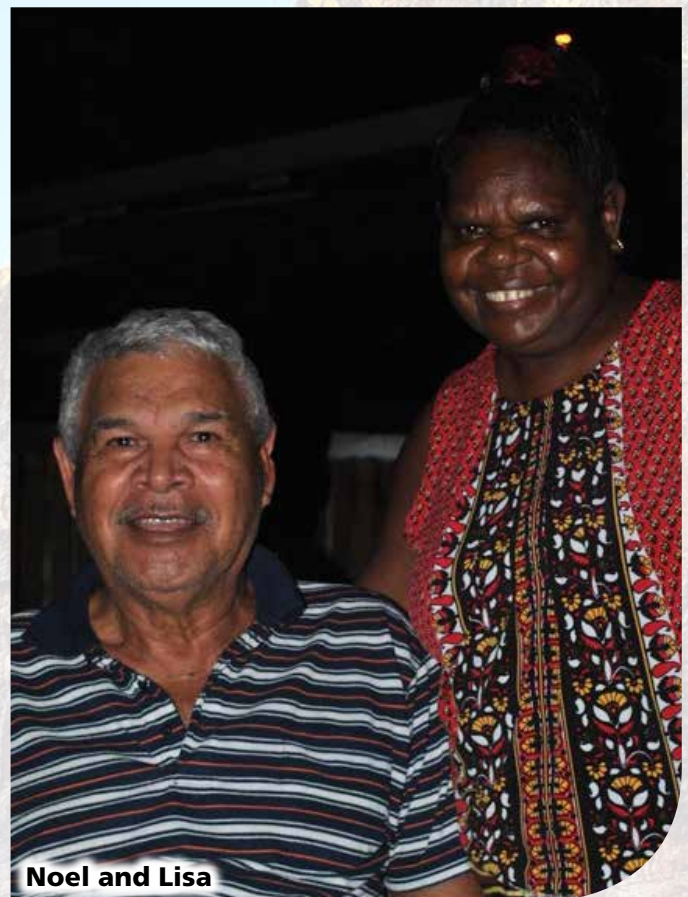
At first it took time and some hard talk to get us all involved. We all used to go along but didn't have much responsibility. We already knew about the dark spiritual ways and as Christians we knew that we were being attacked spiritually, and we would get sick and go to hospital. We all used to go to Greg and Debbie every week for prayer — we would go to them each time, but one day they decided to teach us the Scriptures. They started doing Bible study and showing us that God works in and through all of us! Once we got into Bible study we began to understand the teaching and things began to change.

This really became real to us when Pastor Greg took us to Barunga one time. We didn't know what was going on, but soon found there was very powerful spiritual warfare going on. We could hear the sounds of the spiritual warfare inside the building. But as we all prayed we saw God overrule the powers of darkness. This experience showed us that we also have God's power and authority in His work. He works in and through us the same as any people. After that we started to pray for one another in church, homes, and the hospital. People began to recognize and respect us and didn't have to go to pastor Greg and Debbie for prayers and help. Over the years we have learned the depth of truth of God's Word and its authority. It has become very alive to us & through us all.

We began to learn who we are and what to expect as Christians. It is not just reading stories and singing. We are working and living God's Word in our daily lives. This gives us the courage to stand up and be leaders and stay leaders. We have a leadership team of both men and women. We are able to work well together in a very respectful way.

Lisa leads with the music — getting it ready and often plays the keyboard, leading in the service, and sometimes giving the message. She does up a roster ensuring that each one on the Leadership Team takes part in the different roles like Sunday school teaching, preaching, cleaning up, and leading. Sometimes she helps with the bus driving which takes up to an hour before the service and again afterwards.

Her secular leadership has not been without problems. While she was Jawoyn Assoc. Chairperson a group



Noel and Lisa

became disgruntled. They joined together and were calling for her to be sacked. At a big meeting with large groups on both sides there, Lisa decided it was best for her reputation and witness as a Christian to walk away quietly rather than argue her innocence. She was stood down for a time, but recently the Board of Elders & Directors moved for her to be re-instated as the Chairperson, and have also promoted her to be trained as the CEO.

*I like having these different roles, responsibilities, and opportunities. But I've got to say as long as I keep my eyes on Jesus, it is Him who will get me through. He has done it in the past and I can trust him to do it again and again.*

**Other leadership opportunities continue to knock. Lisa wants to use her time and talent to serve the Lord and her people of the Katherine region — but she needs wisdom and guidance from God to know what to take on, and what to turn down. Please pray for this Christian sister and the vital roles she fulfills in the Katherine Church and in the Katherine region.**







# A week at a bible college

by Grace Wright Camooweal QLD

In February this year the Wright family spent a week at Sydney Missionary and Bible College as 'missionaries of the week'. It's been twenty years since I was a student there — young, single and thinner! Now I found myself back there again with my husband Jono and three primary aged kids in tow.

I had great memories of missionaries staying at College during my time, especially the single lady missionaries. There was a tiny, cute 'mission flat' up in the back of the beautiful old original building of the college, and there us single girls would get together and have heart to hearts over Tim Tams. So when we were first invited to be missionaries in residence for the week as a family, I had my doubts! Did they really want the whole family?! The organisers insisted they did — they wanted students to see what it was really like for missionary families on the field.

Our main role for the week was basically just to talk with students — about their journey toward fulltime ministry, and about our experiences in cross-cultural work particularly in a fairly remote situation. We found that the large majority of students had little or no information or exposure to Aboriginal people or ministry among them. During seminars through the week, Jono was able to challenge students to rethink ministry closer to home, to get over 'the hill' (the Great Dividing Range). We were able to talk about the problem of indigenous people having been fairly well evangelised, but not always well disciplined and the indigenous church seeming weak in some areas. There are still great needs in building the church.

When we go 'down south' we are always struck by the increasing worldliness within

the church. So it was wonderfully refreshing to spend time with people of all ages and backgrounds who are passionate about the Gospel, God's kingdom and things of eternal significance. A team from the college visited *Richard and Sue Davies* at Canteen Creek community again this year — another great opportunity to raise awareness of indigenous ministry and to give students some experience in this context.

***Please pray for AIM as they seek opportunities to make known the unique needs of indigenous ministry. Give thanks for so many people studying for cross-cultural ministry. Pray for the students as they prepare for their future that some who are studying at SMBC and colleges such as these, may be guided by God into towns and communities across Australia to minister amongst our Aboriginal people.***





from Bob Quin — Training Co-ordinator Eastern Australia



Many people have identified leadership training for Aboriginal Churches as a necessity for the continued growth and stability of these Churches. In the past such training was

provided at a full-time residential college at Bimbadeen College at Cootamundra. This training ran from 1979 to 2003 when for various reasons it ceased operating. Full-time residential programs worked well at that time. We are now in a different context and it is more difficult for people to get away for that model of training.

We are seeking to provide a training model which will not necessarily take people out of their working and community environment. For this reason AIM and Bimbadeen have been investigating the Theological Education by Extension (TEE) model of training. We hope to combine this with short (1 to 2 week) Intensive Block courses to be conducted at Bimbadeen.

In preparation for using TEE we have introduced a Discipleship Course from Christian Leaders Training College (CLTC) from Papua New Guinea. This was preceded by a Tutor Training Course from the same college. This has been successful in showing us how the TEE format might go and be modified for use in the Aboriginal Churches. We are now training more tutors who will be ready when our TEE courses come on stream.

As this has been running, I have been conducting a survey of the strengths, weaknesses, needs and requirements of Aboriginal Churches across NSW. This has taken me from Fingal Heads in the North to Eden in the South and out to Moree in the West. I have spoken with people from AEF, AIM, Anglican and Presbyterian Churches and individual Aboriginals in predominantly whitefella churches. It has been a wonderful time sharing with some amazing Aboriginal Christian people. I give heartfelt thanks to all who patiently answered my questions and shared some of their life experiences.

Some of the preliminary outcomes of the survey have

shown among some Aboriginal people there seems to be confusion about who and how people are saved. This comes from a couple of different influences. Unfortunately it is a confusion that hits at the very heart of Christianity and the Gospel message that is for all people and especially in our case - Aboriginals.

One of the reasons for conducting the survey was the notion that has since been confirmed, that training in mainstream colleges might not meet the Aboriginal context. The difference being the essential nature of the mainstream college training is for a materialistic culture. Aboriginal people live in this materialistic culture but there is still a greater awareness of a spiritual world with which our training program will need to engage. As with the broader culture, family relationships and the influence of drugs will also need to be confronted.

The next step to our training program will be to engage with Aboriginal Pastors, educators, theological educators, and writers for a Curriculum Development Seminar where we will decide what we will include to have a culturally appropriate, biblically based, theologically sound and practical program, which will equip leaders to guide Aboriginal Christians through challenging times to a deeper relationship with Jesus.

Once this Curriculum is developed we will commence finding appropriate teaching and training materials. It is expected that this would include already available material such as the CLTC TEE material mentioned. There may be other TEE materials that we can source. There may also be teaching materials and resources for the Block courses as well. We might need to modify existing teaching material for a TEE format which include the MPA (Mission Publications of Australia) books written originally for Aboriginal people. Where these resources do not fulfil our curriculum then there will be the need to write subject syllabus and material from the beginning.

As you can see there is still much to be done and we would value your prayers for:

- Faithfulness to Jesus in this whole process
- Ongoing wisdom for the participants in the Curriculum Development Seminar
- Discernment in choosing appropriate teaching material
- Diligence in writing new material
- God's blessing on those who will teach and use this Leadership program



# new workers



From inner city Sydney with Churches of Christ to somewhere in the outback with AIM ... that is the current journey of new workers *Peter and Karen Dixon*. For the past 24 years the Dixons have ministered in the inner-west suburb of Marrickville. Their ministry in this multi-cultural area has included helping families learn English and kids getting their homework done as well as teach in many public school Religious Education classes. Though through the years many different people were ministered to within and through the church, it remained a fairly small congregation. This gave him great empathy with the missionaries of ECM (European Christian Mission) of which he was Council Chairman for the past 16 years.

The dynamics in Marrickville were changing and Peter was involved in the Reconciliation movement. They began to hear of how God was at work spiritually among the Indigenous people, not just socially and politically. Through these things and in His own divine way, the Lord began to direct their hearts to seek to minister among the Indigenous people.

Once on the field Peter will focus on pastoral ministry. Karen is a teacher and plans to get a job in this area wherever AIM places them. She majored in English and History and through the years has done various types of teaching. She has taught courses through TAFE including helping women of various cultures establish and run Playgroups and adult English as a Second Language. There was a break from her work to be mother to their 5 children — all of whom are adults now. They also have the joy of being grandparents, and will soon become 'in-laws' again.

While doing some linguistic studies, her leader had worked in Lake Nash among the Alyawarr people so she did one semester in that language. This (along with not being keen on humidity!) has given them a desire to work in the drier areas.

***They ask you to join them in praying for God's wisdom and guidance for the AIM Council as they prayerfully consider the best area for placement for Peter and Karen, whom we warmly welcome into the AIM family.***

## newspots...

### Deaths

*Molly Helyar* nee *Fletcher* died 17th Jan 2015. She was known as Molly Fletcher during her 8 years with AIM where she worked on a number of centres. Sympathy is extended to her family and friends.

Sympathy is extended to *Ann Shaw* and family following the death of her husband *Neville*. He was a volunteer at Darwin Community Church during its building and established a radio broadcast ministry for a time. He also served for a time on the AIM Council when they relocated south.

### Health

In late February *Phil Spiers*, TEAM Partner in Mullaley NSW was in a motorbike accident on the farm where he works. He suffered a compound fracture to his leg. Please pray for his recovery.

After her back surgery in January, *Debbie McKerrell* has unfortunately gone 'back to square one'. The disc has prolapsed and she is in considerable pain. Pray for God's wisdom and direction for the way forward for her. Remember Bob too who is facing surgery on 7th May. Pray for a good outcome for him and for God's peace to strengthen them both.

### Changes and Congratulations

Both *Jono Wright* and *Rob Alley* have stepped down from their roles of Member Care. At the annual extended Council meetings *Cliff Letcher* was appointed to this role for the Northern Territory for the next three years.

Cliff will be getting remarried on 30th May. He and *Carolyn* hope to visit the NT workers when she takes leave from her Blue Mountains teaching position in the 3rd school term. *Congratulations Cliff and Carolyn and may God bless your lives and ministry together.*



### Relocating

*Richard and Sue Davies* are currently sorting and packing up at Canteen Creek and also at their house in Tennant Creek. They hope to be on the road by the end of July to relocate to their home in Cootamundra NSW. They will be on leave for their first six months there. Pray for strength, safety, and God's grace in all of these matters for them.





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New Series Volume 51 No 2

**Design & Printed by**

Springwood Printing Company Pty Ltd  
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www.springwoodprinting.com.au

**Subscription**

The Aim Magazine subscriptions are \$10.00 a year (inclusive of GST). Please send to AIM Office.

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