



# Experienced in MINISTRY

Baptist Union of Victoria  
Newsletter for mature pastors, missionaries, partners, retirees

## RETIREMENT: BOOKS

By Chris Pittendrigh

One of the most valued possessions of every pastor is their private collection of books.

Hardly a day passes without accessing this rich depository of material, for preparing sermons, Bible studies and various homilies, talks and chats given on special occasions, such as funerals and weddings.

The number of books in a pastor's working library can exceed three or four hundred, carefully collected over many years. Most, if not all, of our books mean a great deal to us. Hence the thought of down-sizing our collection as retirement looms can be a challenging task – and exacerbated if the space for storing books in our retirement housing is considerably less than we enjoyed during our preretirement years.

Where do we start? Here are some practical suggestions.

First, determine the **number** of books you can comfortably fit in the bookshelf space available in your retirement accommodation.

Second, **identify the books you would like to retain**, ensuring you have a balanced selection drawn from a variety of theological fields such as Bible commentaries on various books of the Old and New Testament, theology, church history, pastoral care and spirituality. A Bible dictionary and a concordance could also be useful, while recognising that much of the material in these reference works is available on the internet.

Third, in making a **list of books** to retain, be sure to include some which will stretch your thinking.

Fourth, adopt a **criterion for rejecting books** for your retirement collection. Ask yourself, am I ever likely to read this book again? If not, be courageous and ditch it! Do not be surprised if you discover a number of books in your library you have had for some years but never read!



Chris and Heather Pittendrigh

Fifth, **dispose of your remaining books**. Recently I culled a 100 or more volumes from my library by offering them to family members, young people training for ministry and friends. This process left me with a few dozen books which I cheerfully offloaded to *New Life Old Books & Archaeology*, 44 Dublin Road East Ringwood at the rear of the Ringwood East Baptist Church ([www.lifebooks.info](http://www.lifebooks.info))

## SEMINAR: PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT

This Seminar is being arranged by the Experienced in Ministry team (previously 'Retired Pastors')

***It is for pastors and pastoral couples approaching retirement (55+) and those already retired.***

**The purpose is** to provide a forum for current pastors so they can begin to address issues they will face as they prepare for and experience retirement; and to provide pastors already retired with the perspectives they need so they can continue positively in their journey of retirement.

**Date:** Tuesday September 6<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 9:30am-3:00pm

**Venue:** North Balwyn Baptist Church, 136 Doncaster Rd, North Balwyn 3104

**Cost:** \$20 - Pay cash on the day – Morning tea and lunch included

**Program:** See attached flyer for more details

**Guest:** Robert Latimer, Senior Financial Planner, Partner Financial Group North Blackburn will be speaking on "Money Issues for Retirement"

**RSVP:** August 30 to Sylvia West at the BUV office, [sylvia.west@buv.com.au](mailto:sylvia.west@buv.com.au), (03) 9880 6114, PO Box 377, Hawthorn, VIC, 3122 (Please add any dietary needs)

**Any Questions?** Talk with Geoff Rowse on 0419 106 005 or email at [geoffrowse@optusnet.com.au](mailto:geoffrowse@optusnet.com.au)

## EXPERIENCED IN MINISTRY ANNUAL LUNCH

Ian Paxton, Graham Neilson and Gwyn Milne have started making plans for our next Experienced in Ministry lunch.

The current plans are to meet at NewHope Baptist Church on **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December** at around 10.30am, initially for a chat and a cuppa, and then for a meal and other activities from 11.30am. Details to come next issue.

# ALERT, BUT UNNOTICED (EXCEPT BY GOD)

*By Grace Munro*

It was a rush! I grabbed four books from the nearest library shelf, and raced out again. One book was awful. Two were OK. And the fourth stunned and amazed me. It was ***Ghost Boy*** by South African Martin Pistorius and Megan Lloyd Davies, published by Simon and Schuster, UK, in 2011.

Martin had been a happy, healthy and very bright 12 year old. Then his mind and body failed. He writes of that time, "Nothing could reach me as my muscles wasted, my limbs became spastic and my hands and feet curled in on themselves like claws. ... As my father held me upright, my mother spooned food into my mouth and I swallowed instinctively. Other than that, I didn't move. I was completely unresponsive. I was in a kind of waking coma that no one understood."

For the next four years, Martin was effectively unconscious and unaware. He was in a care home during the day, and his parents would take him home at night.

"And then," he writes, "one day, I started coming back to life." His mind awakened. However, because his body wouldn't do as he wanted, no-one knew. He writes, "I was cared for – fed and watered, wiped and cleaned, but never really noticed. Again and again I'd ask my unruly limbs to make a sign and show someone I was still there, but they would never do as I asked."

He tells of a time with his father, "I'm sitting on my bed. My heart is beating as my father undresses me. I want him to know, to understand that I've returned to him. He must see me! ....Every bit of me condenses into this moment. I stare at my arm – pleading, cajoling, admonishing and begging. My heart leaps as I feel it respond to my please. My arm is waving high above my head. At last I'm leading the way back to myself with the kind of sign I've spent so long trying to make.

But when I look at my father, neither shock nor surprise is written on his face. He simply carries on pulling off my shoes. 'Dad! I'm here! Can't you see?'"

Martin wrote, "I think my mind started to awaken at about the age of sixteen and by nineteen it was fully intact once more: I knew who I was and where I was, and I understood that I'd been robbed of a real life. I was completely entombed."

Sometimes, he escaped into fantasy, imagining he could walk and sing and move. But, he added, "The one person I talked to was God but he wasn't part of my fantasy world. He was real to me, a presence inside and around that calmed and reassured me...I spoke to God as I tried to make sense of what had happened to me and asked him to protect me from harm. God and I didn't talk about the big things in life – we didn't engage in philosophical debates or argue about religion – but I talked to him endlessly because I knew we shared something important. I didn't have proof that he existed but I believed in him anyway because I knew he was real. God did the same for me. Unlike people, he didn't need proof that I existed – he knew I did."

After six years of being alert but unnoticed, one of his nurses realised that maybe Martin was responding. He was taken to communication experts and this was shown to be the case.

Martin's recovery took a long time and even by age 30 he still had major disabilities. He was unable to speak, his movements were very spastic and he was dependant on a wheelchair.

But he communicated, initially with message boards, then computers. He went on to become a computer expert, a communications worker with people with disabilities, a web designer, an author, and much more.

It was a book well worth reading!

## WHAT SATISFIES?

*By Andrew and Phyllis Beattie*

"Why spend money on what is not bread and your labour on what does not satisfy?" (Isaiah 55:2)

This was the final convincing argument that shifted us from a safe, well-remunerated but boring accounting position in Melbourne to a short-term voluntary position with ABWaid (Australian Baptist World Aid). What followed was seven months of the richest experience life could offer, working with Global Interaction missionaries who had dedicated their lives to the needy people in Zambia. There were times of stress but also great times of fellowship and many, many laughs - usually at our expense, as we came to grips with the Zambian way of life.



Two brash Australians soon found that things that had been taken for granted in Australia, such as phones and faxes and the availability of basic foodstuff were not so readily available in Zambia.

The country was experiencing severe drought in 1992 and the subsistence farming communities were struggling with food and seed shortages and lack of clean water. Our role was to "administer" a drought relief program, where funding had been made available from the Australian Government and ABWaid. We soon found that "administering the funding" included hiring the trucks, supervising the loading of up to thirty tonnes of maize and soy beans and following the trucks out to the villages surrounding the Fiwale Hill mission station, often with an armed guard sitting alongside the driver. In the "in-between" moments there was the digging of new water wells or deepening existing ones around Malambanyama.

The rains came and our role ended. We had volunteered to stay on and work on other projects, but this was not to be. Our visas had run out and would not be renewed. God obviously had other plans!

On returning to Melbourne, we were enlisted by our local church as Administrator (that word again!) over the period of its relocation. Then followed four years accounting at the Baptist Union of Victoria. All these positions required a husband and wife presence - they were far more than pure numbering. With considerable travelling times, either between Zambian villages or between Victorian churches, it provided good opportunity for us to share thoughts and ideas.

Our five children have been very supportive in whatever venture we have undertaken and we are enjoying watching them develop their own families. With ten of our thirteen grandchildren now able to drive, we realise that time marches on and that there may not be another "Zambian" experience for us - but who knows?

## WE REMEMBER ROBERT (BOB) CALLAGHAN, BARBARA DUNN

**CALLAGHAN, Robert (Bob), 1934-2016.** Bob was the only one who survived infancy of four boys, a son of a shearer. He was initially a production assistant in an advertising firm, and he then did teacher training. He found faith at a weekend church camp. On graduating as a teacher, he and Val married and, in 1960, their daughter Joy was born. After teaching English as a Second Language at a school near Villawood Migrant Hostel, they were accepted into the Unevangelized Fields Mission (later known as Asia Pacific Christian Mission, which became part of Pioneers of Australia). They spent several years in Papua New Guinea, and David and Sharon were added to the family. Bob was the headmaster of a primary school, and they were instrumental in starting a church which first met in their home. Bob's devotion to the Lord and his attention to detail marked him as a true leader.

At age 37 Bob was called back to Australia to be the Director of Asia Pacific Christian Mission, serving for 15 years. He then took up a role with the Australian Evangelical Alliance Missions Commission, now known as Missions Interlink, and then in 'retirement' assisted with pastoral work in various places.

Above all, Bob remained a loving and devoted husband to Val, and encouraging and supportive father to their children. We extend our sympathy to the family who will miss him a great deal.

**DUNN (nee Robertson), Barbara, 1937-2016.** For Barbara, family was vitally important. She met Allan Dunn when she was only 14 years old, they were engaged when she was 19, and married four years later in 1960. Barbara also had a strong commitment to God, and publicly expressed her desire to follow Jesus Christ when she was 16.

With SIM International, they served in Ethiopia from 1961, where Barbara learned the local language and was a well-respected teacher who loved being an educator. Her interest in different cultures continued throughout her life.

In 1966 they returned to Melbourne, and Allan took up Baptist Ministry in a number of churches. As a pastor's wife, Barbara was a warm, compassionate and vibrant woman who always went out of her way to help others.

Allan said of her, "Barb loved life; she loved her family, she loved her friends, she loved her dogs, she loved nature and she loved her God. No matter what situation she was presented with, no matter how challenging, she was able to overcome it. She was loving, tender hearted, caring and ever aware of people's needs, with a strong commitment to making a difference and helping people in need."

We extend our sympathy to all members of Barbara's family.

## BIRTHDAYS

We include these dates so that you have the opportunity to make contact with the people on the day of their birthday. If you would like your birthday included, please contact us and give us the date.

**August:** 2 Bev Simmonds, 4 Sue Dangerfield & John Strugnell, 9 Dorothy Kellem, 10 Marion Watson, 11 Lindsay & Meryl Smith & Ekkehart Friesen, 16 Tom Malone, 17 John Simpson, 19 Barrie Sutton & Marion Himbury, 21 Marie McKelvie, 23 Gladys Seawright

**September:** 2 Judith Gill, 4 Joy Shannon, 7 Alison Morley, 11 Gwyn Milne, 24 Ian Paxton, 27 Neville Kellam, 29 Don Steck

**October:** 1 June Robertson, 3 Ken Manley, 8 Alex White, 12 Jennifer Evans, 14 Marry McDonald, 20 Bill Leng, 22 Brian McKelvie, 24 Edith Brown and Bob Payne, 25 Harry Monro

**November:** 2 Muriel Poupard, 3 Maria Smith and Judy Forbes, 15 Alison Payne, 19 Lorna Marx, 20 Dorothy Pell, 21 Olive Paice, 23 Dorothy Kellam, 24 Alan Patino, 25 Alice Wilkinson and Francis Holland, 28 Julie Sutton, 30 Harry Seawright and Jocelyn Tinsley

**December:** 2 Helen Wilcox, 4 Jeff Wilkinson, 5 Rowland Croucher, 6 Judy Wright, 9 Tony Cupit, 10 Mona Sprigg, 17 Richard Dangerfield, 20 Bronwyn Prout, 25 Christine Cook and Christine Wade, 26 Kathleen Malone.

## PLEASE CONTACT US

The Pastoral Care team for the over-65s, led by Alan Marr, will meet again on in August, and the next *Experienced in Ministry* is planned for early November 2016.

Contact [alan.marr@myinbox.net.au](mailto:alan.marr@myinbox.net.au), 0407 095 695 (Ministry Leader) or [gracemunro8@gmail.com](mailto:gracemunro8@gmail.com) , 9808 1692 (Editor) or by mail C/- BUV PO Box 377, Hawthorn, VIC, 3122