

January to March 2007

COMMISSION

The newsletter of The Assemblies of God UK World Ministries
Department (incorporating In Touch and Incare News)

Return
to
Sudan



incare

WORLD MINISTRIES
AOG



COMISSION

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Comment

Welcome to the first edition of CoMission for 2007, an edition of great diversity with items covering Europe, Africa, the Far East and Asia. There are some interesting insights to working in China and a major feature on what it's like to go onto the Mission Field for the first time from a young couple who have just left to work in Slovakia. Our heart at World Ministries is not just to inform you about your missionaries but also to encourage you to become more involved in missions and to, perhaps, influence your own fellowship into active participation in reaching out to "...the uttermost parts". To this end we have included another of our occasional articles "churches in mission", this time featuring the Living Word Christian Centre in Paisley, Scotland. If your assembly has a missions programme we'd like to hear from you; help us to remind our fellowships of God's great commission, that no-one is exempt and that "Go into all the world..." means just that. So as we enter into a new year, full of hopes and plans, let us be united in our aim of bringing the good news of Christ's saving power to a world in dire need of such good news. Remember, He has chosen us to do the job, let us respond and then we will know the true depth of God's love and grace and truth.

Inside this magazine you will have received our ever-popular Prayer Diary which we know is used by many churches and groups to inspire their prayer meetings as well as their own personal times alone with God. If you would like extra copies of this please contact Susan Chalmers (details on left).

Asia Missions conference

Mike Dixon, Director for Asia Pacific, reports on the recent Asia Missions Conference in Singapore.

British Assemblies of God missionaries, working in various countries in Asia Pacific, met in early September 2006 for the 8th bi-annual Asia Workers Conference. Thirty-six people gathered for the week of inspiration, sharing and retreat at the YMCA in Orchard Road, Singapore. As well as our Asia workers, also present at the conference was a team from the North Coast Church, Towyn, North Wales, who had been involved in short term missions in two different areas of the Philippines immediately prior to the Singapore event.

David Russon, World Ministries General Director Designate spoke at the opening celebration, and again he addressed the conference delegates at the closing meeting. The morning sessions of the conference were given over to Bible teaching and this came from superintendency team member, Alan Hewitt, whose practical and challenging teaching was very much appreciated by all present. Each evening, under the banner of "Focus on the Field", two missionaries (or missionary couples) had the opportunity to bring a presentation of their work, together with the challenges they were facing. These honest presentations were followed by time given over to prayer and input into those who had shared.

Having been involved with our workers in Asia for a number of years, I never cease to be grateful to God for the tremendous privilege of being associated with such a great group of committed people. It was humbling to listen to the various presentations, to sense the passion each one has for the vital work of missions, and to hear first-hand of the things God is doing through our Asia workers.

It was also our privilege to have at conference, Phillida Bennett, from the IBTI in Burgess Hill. Phillida, who has served our missionaries extremely well over many years, was our guest of honour and was presented with a book as a thank you from the Asia workers.



Catherine Young honours Phillida Bennet

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Prayer and praise (1)

Mozambique

Gillian Harris writes:

This is my report following my move from Quelimane to the north of Mozambique. The actual journey was every bit as difficult as I had been warned, but I am settling well in my new location. The flat I have rented is now fixed up sufficiently for the length of time I will be living in it and I have discovered the best places to buy most of the basic necessities of life and where to pay my bills every month. A new town, a new challenge and now - new money. In July new coins and notes started to be introduced, with the final 1,000 now cut. At the moment it's still all quite a confusion, but I am sure we will master the change soon. Sadly, I will no longer be able to be a millionaire! In accordance with our plans, we have started to work with the children in 2 areas of the town. On Saturday afternoons we are in an area known as Paquitequete; a part of the town, down at sea level, populated by the Mwani people. It is a poor and seemingly neglected area, due to the strong tribal divisions which exist here. The Mwani hold to Islam as part of their culture and to convert to Christianity will probably mean rejection by your family. We have initiated our work here in a borrowed shelter and with the guidance of a local Christian. So far, results have been encouraging. Saturday morning is the time for the children in the immediate area of my flat, up in the main part of the town. The flat has a large enough room to house our activities at the moment. Whilst a town will always attract a mix of people groups and cultures, the Macua people form the majority in this area. Again Islam is the dominant religion and influence.

In addition to the focus on children we want to plant a church in this area, and, in fact, our first efforts have been to this end. On Sunday mornings we have an ever-changing group of people meeting with us, with a core group that are slowly becoming regular. Most of these have little or no knowledge of the Bible at all and they need to hear clear and simple teaching from the very basics of what we believe as no previous understanding can be assumed. Much work will be required to see a strong church established here. One help towards building a strong ministry is the security of a fixed location. This was one of my main desires in moving to Pemba. I would like to purchase a house in the town with sufficient space for our work with children and our growing church, plus the literature ministry. Due to the dominance of Islam in the area, I believe that working within the setting of a house is a more effective strategy. I would also like to be able to purchase something suitable for our children down in Paquitequete, when an appropriate location becomes available. If you would like to contribute in any way towards these plans, to strengthen our work amongst the children and adults of Pemba, your help would be greatly appreciated. If you'd like to help with this vision Please contact Peter Miles at peter.miles8@btpenworld.com or call Harry Wake on 01933 229598.



Japan

Matt and Nadine Hughes, now back in Japan, write :

Sometimes it can be difficult returning to Japan after a time away – the language, various aspects of the culture, and isolation can occasionally be challenging, but this time we adjusted back quickly, felt very at home and were soon back into the swing of things. In the middle of September, Matt MC'd an Interdenominational Youth Event in Nagoya. A Hillsong-style band from Tokyo led the worship and with almost 300 people attending, it was a huge step forward in comparison to past events. Hopefully a sign of things to come! At the end of September, Matt travelled to the south of Japan to attend a missions course called Kairos. He was freshly inspired by God's heart for the unreached and is now looking at ways to develop this from Japan.

Praise Points:

- God's grace for our return to Japan
- A successful youth event in Nagoya
- Fresh inspiration on the Kairos course

In November, Youth Outreach will host a National Youth Leaders Retreat in the Nagano Mountains, with guest speaker, Phil Cann. We have representatives from a number in different youth organizations already registered. This retreat is something that we would love to see happen every year and as far as we know, there is nothing of its kind happening in Japan.

Carolyn and Johan Ros from Amsterdam, YWAM, will be visiting us next month and sharing at our Returnees meeting and also at an inter-denominational ladies meeting.

Prayer Points:

- God's presence to be felt at the Youth Leaders Retreat
- Effective ministry at returnees and ladies meetings
- We cannot fit our family & guests into the car we have at the moment and are trusting God for approx £3,500/\$7,000 for a new vehicle.



Prayer and praise (1) continued

Nigeria

Following their recent furlough, Andrew and Jenny Daniels write:

We have been back in Benin City, with Andrew as 'Head of Operations' since the start of August.

The school is going on very well by the grace of God. We, and the staff, have had to make some major decisions about the student scholarships. We had agreed at the end of last semester that the fees should go up by 50% as they were very low and there has been high inflation for several years. Also the staff were given a 35% pay rise which was overdue. The students now have to pay for each meal as they eat but there is more choice and they can buy more if they wish. Over half the money they need is for feeding. We are still retaining scholarships for the Hausa and French classes – 31 and 48 students respectively. The English main class who want to apply for scholarships have to fill an application form and we have decided to give 100 scholarships per semester to those most deserving. We have about 600 in the full time main class.

Some students are not eating well enough and so the senior staff are looking out for these so as to give them extra help. Some eat just cassava and groundnuts all the time. We have had some gifts come in to help and both Hausa and French Deans have been sharing the money to the most needy. Recently a visiting team from Australia gave gifts totalling US\$500. They were led by Archbishop Idahosa's best friend there, Bishop Harry Westcott, who arranged Idahosa's crusades there in the 80s and 90s. We had a marvellous time with them at the Bible School. The Lord brought forth a word that 'The battle is the Lord's' and the presence and power of God took over the classroom with 20 minutes of anointed and spontaneous worship and praise! It was powerful! Harry said it was his best ever visit to Nigeria. They were all blessed.

Our Kanuri graduate, Musa Ali, whose property was burned in the March Moslem jihad in Maiduguri, paid us a visit recently with the news that he is continuing his ministry and has won two more Kanuri converts. He has had to send all his converts to other states for their safety, as people are seeking to kill some of them. He told us he has bought a plot of land with the money given to him by the southern churches and plans to build a house there as now even Christians do not want to risk renting him a room

in case of more trouble. He is a marked man and the Sharia court called him to answer the charge of converting Moslems to Christ but he spoke so well that they dropped the case for now, but he is under threat and needs our prayers.

The classes are going on well in the school, but we need to have funds to repair or replace many things, a/c, computers, generator etc. and to pay all outstanding debts to the market. Two big blessings we received personally have been first that a much better car has been provided for us from the Mission, as directed by Mama Idahosa. We heard that three arms of the ministry all contributed to get it. It is a Nissan "Bluebird" automatic with air conditioning and it is very smooth running and fuel-efficient. We praise God for this gift! Also we were sent a new Toshiba laptop computer from our supporter, Pastor Gary Whetstone in USA. The old one came from them in 2002, but has been acting up recently, so this was a timely gift! Bless them!

We had an enjoyable weekend when our son, Philip, visited us in Benin. He was on a 3-week tour of Ghana and Nigeria, visiting universities and building research institutes, investigating what research is being done into the revived use of mud blocks in West African modern architecture. Compacted mud has advantages in that it is cheap, insulates from the heat and is even bullet proof! (All needful in Africa). We really covet your prayers for wisdom in leading 'this great people' of our college. Pray also that right decisions are made and we hold strongly together in the love of Christ! Pray for Jenny to be an able helper!



Jamaica

Veron and Claire Kinkead write on their return to Jamaica after their itinerary in the UK:

Here we are back in Jamaica after five wonderful months of itinerary in the UK. Thanks to all of you who opened your homes and churches to us. We were blessed by the warm fellowship we experienced everywhere and we shall treasure these memories. Gradually, we are settling back in our life and ministry here in Jamaica.

On the first Sunday after our return, we had a big surprise when we arrived at the church in Junction. Jermaine, the Bible College graduate who had taken care of the church in our absence, had organised a special Welcome Back Service with the Junction Church and the Bible College. It was lovely to see the church packed and to be reunited with everyone. The following Friday, a nine-member Missions team from New Life -Wembley led by Marsha Grant-stayed overnight with us. They returned to Kingston with some supplies for the school they had come to help. Earlier during the week, Veron had made a trip to "Food for the Poor" and taken back a truckload of food, second hand clothing and other items.

Last Monday, Veron and I flew to Cuba to bring relief funds and goods on behalf of ROPE for Piedad, the children's relief programme of the Assemblies there. 2600 children are helped with the funds from ROPE; when money is available, they receive food, clothing or medicine according to their needs. All of the children come from very poor backgrounds: some are just extremely poor, with parents in prison or abroad, while others suffer from all sorts of disabilities. The assistance they receive makes a great difference!

It was my first trip to the island - a truly unforgettable experience! Our friends Hector and Dania Hunter, at the request of the Executive there, treated us to a meal to celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary and my birthday. During our visit in Havana, we noticed that AOG churches could be found everywhere – some of the house churches are quite large! One day, we drove past several blocks of flats built by Russians and were told how the church there began. Members from a nearby church had started to

share the gospel from flat to flat. The breakthrough took place when one lady who was seriously ill was wonderfully healed and saved. This miracle paved the way for the gospel to be spread. The lady then opened her home for services to be held. On that estate, there are now 1200 believers meeting in 20 flats! Further on, we went by a town which is the centre for the practice of witchcraft in Cuba (people come from all over the world to be initiated). In that same town there are now 7000 AOG believers meeting in four different churches! That's the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Please pray:

- That the Lord will continue to lead us in our areas of service.
- For our vehicles' needs. We have had to make costly repairs since our return.
- For sponsorship for students at the Bible college,

Thank you again for you prayers and support.



The Kinkead family



The Team from England

Special feature:

Onto the mission field

Moving house and home is a big step in anyone's life and can be full of stress and strain, so imagine what it must be like to not just move, but move to another country with all that that entails - new language, new culture, new money, new friends. Tough, I would say but for one couple, Liz and Mark Holdcroft, they are embarking on such a task safe in the knowledge that it is God's call on their life and that He will bring them through all the trials and tribulations which may occur. Below is just a brief insight into what it is like to set out on the first steps of a missionary journey.

Mark has first say:

After twelve months of preparation, it is hard to believe that we are now here. It is now six weeks into our new venture and it has been a busy time. Everything from sorting out the tax to buying a car takes a lot longer when you are struggling to communicate. Thankfully, we have had a lot of help and

we now have a Slovak Teacher. The busyness and the stress of the move has taken its toll. I have been ill four times since I have been here, but now seem to be getting a little better. I appreciate your prayers. On the first Sunday that we arrived, the church held its celebration service which officially recognised the start of the church planting programme. Miro, the founder of Novéé Zámky Church, has now moved, with his family, to Nitra in order to start the church plant there. Milan, the former youth pastor, will be leading the Novéé Zámky Church. A gentleman called Slavo will be moving to a city called Komarmo to plant a church there. David, a young man who has been trained under Milan, will be taking on responsibility for the youth work. My role is that of teaching pastor. I will be based at Novéé Zámky but will also actively support the two church plants. This will involve producing and delivering teaching materials to take people from being new believers to potential church leaders. I am creating a five series set of courses that will then run continuously throughout the year. It will take around six months to complete one full

cycle of courses.. At the end of each course there will be a challenge for the believer as well as an expected commitment.

For example during the first course, My God, the student will be challenged to be baptised. Each course will consist of at least four lessons that will equip the student in a different aspect of the Christian life. I am hoping to be able to run the lessons on the first course just after Christmas and so am very busy studying at the moment. The idea for the structure of the lessons came from Miro, as the five areas, Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship, Service and Evangelism, are the five pillars on which the Novéé Zámky church is built. Once I have finished the lesson plans, I will send them across if anybody thinks that they might be useful for use elsewhere. This project means that I am busy studying and preparing materials.

To make sure that I don't end up in front of the computer for too long, I am also involved in two other main areas of ministry. One is the youth work and the second is the homeless project. The church operates a soup kitchen facility each week to feed the homeless. It is a great opportunity to show love and to share the gospel with some of the most needy members of society. We are currently looking at how we can develop this further. Please pray for wisdom and opportunity in this area.

Looking to the future, I will be taking on the Bible School from next September. Thankfully this gives me a little time to work



on my language ability. I have enrolled on an MA in Missions course with Mattersey Bible college which should hopefully assist me in this area.

Liz's turn:

Since July, life just seems to have flown by as we were so busy sorting a multitude of things out. It is only really now, as we are finally settling down, that I have been able to really take stock of it all, and just give thanks to our absolutely amazing God. I know, without a shadow of a doubt, that He carried us through that time, and continues to now. So what have I been up to these last six weeks? Well, initially most of my time was spent unpacking, and tying up loose ends in England over the phone. Also, Mark and I had the joy of settling Jessica back into a normal routine after the somewhat chaotic schedule of our final weeks in England. I'm glad to say she is completely settled now. After this initial stage, I started to get involved with the Mothers Centre at the church; this is a kind of mum's and toddler's group that runs Tuesday to Friday from 9 a.m. until 1p.m each day. Everyday there are different activities that the mothers can get involved with while their children play. On Fridays I am responsible for teaching an advanced English class to any of the mums who are interested. It's a one hour class and at the



for the first time

moment there are between five and seven mums who attend. The purpose of the class is to provide a practical service for the mothers and also to build relationships with them. I hope to be able to share my testimony with them at some point. I am also part of the church's worship team. At the moment I am just playing the flute as I don't know the words to the Slovak songs, and even if I did, I would not be able to pronounce them accurately. I will also be helping the singers within the team by giving them singing lessons. As for actually singing, I have already ministered in song a number of times, and this will be something I will continue to do, although eventually I will sing in Slovak.

So what of the future? Well, one of my main responsibilities will be the children's work within the church. This is one area of the church that is really in need of attention. For the last two years there has been no-one to take charge of it, and so it's just been continuing without any real direction. However, there is a girl called Viki, who is currently studying at a Bible college in Denmark, who has a passion for children's work and will be returning to Slovakia at Christmas. So we will be able to develop a children's programme together. In the meantime, we are just getting to know one another. Besides my church commitments, my main responsibility is taking care of Jessica who seems to be enjoying her new life as a missionary. She enjoys mixing with the other children at the mothers centre and is now into a good routine. Your prayers for her are very much appreciated.

It has taken a long time to get here and the journey has not always been easy. However, it has been a very rewarding one, and we have made a lot of friends along the way. Take our time at Mattersey Bible College

for example. We were greatly encouraged by a lot of Christians who were taking a very similar journey to ourselves. We saw miracles (Dawn, a lady on the course was healed of a food disorder that used to result in anaphylactic shocks.) We even had a baptism. Most of all we just made very good friends. (Jessica was the youngest student there.) Eventually we arrived in Slovakia. One of the things that we were warned about on the Mattersey Course was culture shock. Thankfully, having been to Slovakia four times before, we haven't been surprised by too many things.

So what are the differences between England and Slovakia then? The weather : before we came, we were told that both the summers and the winters lasted a lot longer than in England. However we did expect to have a little bit of Autumn. Instead, in the last week of October we were still wearing T-shirts, seven days later we were being snowed on. The food : there isn't a massive difference in food between Slovak and English dishes, but we have had a couple of surprises. The first was when we had chicken soup as guests at a house. The feet were left in! Apparently, some people think that they are the nicest part. We also

got a pleasant surprise when we ministered at a nearby church on Harvest Sunday. It is traditional for all those who minister on this day to be given the harvest. We had a huge box of vegetables to split between three of us. It was absolutely great, the only problem is we're not sure what all the vegetables are and so don't know what to do with them... any ideas then please let us know. The people : we have found the people of Slovakia to be kind, caring and generous. However, there also appears to be an immense amount of low self esteem. People find it hard to understand why anybody would want to come to Slovakia. We have a number of reasons for this, but the main one is the need for people to have a personal relationship to Jesus Christ. The only religion that most people are familiar with is Catholicism. Many cities still have little or no evangelical presence. Things are changing however. There is a new church planting drive, not just in this region, but across the country. Our desire is to allow God to use us, to assist the growth of His Kingdom in this country, in any way that we can. It is only because of your prayers and support that we are able to do that. For that we are truly grateful.

The church at Nove Zamky



Prayer and praise (2)

Thailand

Greetings from Brian and Margaret Burton:

This year has seen many new developments in our ministry and we want to take this opportunity to update you and THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH US. Margaret is taking on more responsibility in the training and mentoring of the International Church leadership, while Brian needs bigger arms to hold everything together! Praise God, we have a wonderful, expanding team of leaders that we just could not live without.

The Church continues to grow and both our Thai and International Services are bursting at the seams. We have a building plan for the future and already have the land to build a 1000 seater facility. We value your prayers as we work towards seeing this dream a reality. We now have a Burmese service on Sunday afternoon which has grown from 1 to 60 this year. In September we had a special concert for the Burmese and were totally unprepared as over 1000 Burmese turned up for it. Please pray with us that the impact that we are having with the Burmese immigrant workers continues. In September we launched a new outreach in Bangkok aimed at the business community in Thailand and I went there for the

first meeting. Six people turned up for a discussion on communication in business and there was great opportunity to share how God can help us in the workplace. Please pray for Heidi, one of our Senior Leadership Team, as she seeks to establish a Christian Business Network in the nation. The work of our New Life Foundation continues to give many children hope; please join with us in our long-term support of the children of the Tsunami. This month sees another development in PCC's expanding ministry in Phuket. Nic and Sarah McBride, from UK, will be joining us in Phuket at the end of October as we start PAIS Thailand. We will be initially hosting a team of five in 2007 to work into the local schools in Phuket and in time hope to see this develop to train Thai schools workers on a national level. Please pray for Nic, Sarah and the Team as they make their preparations to come to Thailand and for the necessary adjustments to language and culture.

The Lao Church continues to face difficulties from severe persecution, but our commitment to them remains

The land for the new church



strong. We have a Pastor's conference planned soon across the border in Thailand which many will have to walk to. Likewise, the Morgen people are continuing to grow in their new Christian faith, even though during the present monsoon season they have been cut off from us on the mainland. However, as the weather conditions improve during November we will be able to renew our weekly services on their island. Please pray and continue to support our outreach to these needy people groups.

This year has been very important to us personally as two of our four 'adopted' Thai daughters have got married and we have two great sons-in-law. In April, On married David, an Englishman working in Phuket and the worship leader at PCC, then, in August, Nok married Dave, an Australian Christian. He has moved to Phuket and is settling in well. Ice and Mook are both praying for more Daves to arrive at PCC in the near future!



The wedding of Nok and David

Luxembourg

I recently wrote an article about John and Ann Leese, our missionaries in Luxembourg and ended by saying that they were now handing over the church they had started to a new, younger couple. I wasn't able to attend the induction of Paul and Veronique Chandler, but John Wildrienne, who played such a big part in the early days went along and has brought back this report.

It was over 30 years ago, after driving through the little but beautiful country of Luxembourg that I became stirred and burdened when I realised the Gospel witness was basically none existent there. On my return to England I talked to the board of the European Evangelistic Society and it was decided to make an effort there. I spent three days in the city of Luxembourg, looking for a hall where we could start a Gospel meeting. This was almost an impossibility but God miraculously directed us and, soon after distributing leaflets throughout the city together with a few helpers which included Ken Acheson, we started preaching with a congregation of six people, who spoke 3 different languages. Horst Zander a German living in Belgium, moved into the area and a work started which proved extremely hard. We had two tent crusades and the result of this was mainly the conversion of several Portuguese people and when Horst moved on the little Church became a Portuguese speaking Church.

A few years later, after a conversation at General Conference with Ann and John Leese about their call to Mission, they accepted the call to Luxembourg City. It was a totally new start. Another hall was found and the Church now called "La Rencontre" came into being. It has been hard work, but Ann and John have faithfully carried on and God has blessed. People have been saved, baptised, and filled with the Spirit. They have been discipled and nurtured and the Church has grown such that they felt it was time to pass on the baton



especially as they themselves have become more involved in the DR Congo.

During the last two or three years, Ann and John have become close friends with a young couple working in France, not far from Luxembourg, in the town of Amneville. Not only the friendship grew but often they worked together. Eventually, after some time working together, Ann and John asked the couple, Paul and Veronique Chandler, to take over the Luxembourg Church. Paul, who is English and Veronique, who is French, are both graduates of the IBTI and Paul was on the staff of the IBTI for three years. Sunday 24th September was the day chosen for the induction of Paul and Veronique to the Pastorate of Luxembourg. I had the joy of being invited to preach and be present for the occasion. I had not visited Luxembourg for several years and what a thrill it was when, Sunday morning I stood to preach to a congregation of about 150 people. How God has moved and blessed the ministry of Ann and John. What a blessed time of worship we had and even had the dedication of two babies. In the afternoon, for the Induction Service itself, we had over 200 people and again there were many blessings and thanksgivings and a great look forward in Faith to the future. Paul and Veronique have applied for Missionary status with World Ministries

Europe

Ken and Joyce Acheson of Outreach Europe are two very busy individuals with a schedule which would tax anyone. Their latest news update gives just a flavour of what they are involved in, but let them tell you themselves:

"We had received an invitation to preach in a number of towns and cities in Poland. Our starting-point was Glogow – a city which was devastatingly destroyed during World War II. Thanks to financial aid from the European Union, Glogow is being painstakingly restored to something of its former glory. Throughout the

loathsome post-war Russian occupation, the small group of believers in the city bravely resisted the restrictive practices of the communists. However, Isaiah chapter 40 verse 8 reminds us that: 'The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.' Present day Glogow – (population 75,000) – has two thriving Pentecostal



Churches. Special services were conducted in both communities. The Polish believers have a deep hunger for the 'Things of God' – and rich times of blessing were enjoyed in the Lord's wonderful presence. New folks were present and one evening more than 40 gathered round the altar, some seeking to find forgiveness from sins whilst others requested prayer for healing or for

⇒⇒⇒ God's help in dealing with difficult family circumstances. As both churches are absolutely packed to capacity on Sundays, the leaders decided to open a third place of worship. The assistant mayor of Glogow (a former communist party member, with whom we had a meal one evening) has been of invaluable help in finding suitable rented premises and extensive renovation work has started to transform a disused furniture factory into a sanctuary. This is a real step of faith - funds being very limited. Please remember this project in your prayers.

A number of other cities were visited – Swiebodzin, Polkowice, Jawor, Leszno – and Szprotawa, formerly home to thousands of Russian soldiers because of a nearby Warsaw Pact Airfield where dozens of MIG fighter planes were on continual alert during the 'Cold-War'. The pastor and his family live in a refurbished apartment in a Soviet-built block of flats. In every church visited, hearts were touched by the preaching of God's Word. Adults, young people and children responded to the appeal. Some gave their hearts and lives to Jesus – tears of repentance streaming down their faces. Others prayed for a healing touch from the Saviour's loving hands. There was a tangible awareness of the reality of Jesus being present – just as He promised in Matthew 18/20: 'For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.'

We travelled by car to the south-eastern region of Poland. After a brief stop in Krakow – a fascinating city – we headed for the Carpathian Mountains and the picturesque little town of Wysowa, internationally renowned for its sparkling water which gushes from eight different springs. We had the joy of ministering in the beautifully renovated Pentecostal church, most of the work having been done by 70 year-old pastor Jozek and some men from the congregation. (Pastor Jozek has no salary from the church and is still employed at a local super-market.) Unusually for Poland, no musicians were present but the unaccompanied singing was exquisitely melodious as Slavic voices blended in sweet harmony. A dozen or so requested prayer. After the service we climbed an almost vertical staircase to the upper room, where delicious sandwiches and cakes were enjoyed and experiences exchanged. This was followed by more singing. It was an honour to be with these dear people many of whom have lived through years of privation and hardship."

This is just a small part of an itinerary which has included meetings in Spain in October, Switzerland and Italy in November and in French-speaking churches in Switzerland in December. Please pray for this courageous couple as they spread the Gospel in some of the hardest places in the world – Europe, a forgotten mission field.

Inspiration 4 Mission a Conference reborn

Last October I had the pleasure of attending the World Christian Ministries' 'Inspiration 4 Mission' Conference in Torquay along with many others who had welcomed the return of this popular event on the missions Callander. The Conference had been discontinued in 1999 due to the poor health of both Roy and Elizabeth David who had started the 'Missionary Fellowship Week' on the back of the old 'Home Missions Conference' over 14 years ago. This year the venue was the splendid Toorak Hotel where most of the delegates were housed and the seminars took place. The convenience of being under one roof and the excellent food and accommodation made this a very comfortable as well as enlightening week; the content of the seminars, the quality of the speakers and the inspirational worship all added to a well balanced and relaxing, yet challenging and uplifting week. Unlike the previous conferences, the main aim of this one, now organised by Andrew and Rachel David who took over WCM in April 2004, was to attract young families

and younger people to compliment the usual faithful older generation who have supported this event since it began. To this end half-term week was chosen and the time-table deliberately spaced to give ample time 'off' for using the hotel's excellent facilities and exploring Torquay and the surrounding areas. The result was a good balance of holiday and teaching.

The speakers were of very high quality with Dr John Andrews of Rotherham and Mathersey, Sheldon Armitage of Next Level International, David Prakasam from India and our own missionaries, Mark and Mary Ritchie from Sefton Village in the Philippines. Throughout the week, in both seminars and celebrations, there was a distinct family atmosphere and this was enhanced by the relaxed presentation skills of all the speakers, their contrasting styles keeping everyone interested and sometimes on the edges of our seats. There was a good deal of humour and some good old fashioned fun but this was always coupled with good sound teaching



Above: Roy with Connie and Elsie

Below: Andrew honours his mum and dad





and information of life in missions. There were some great stories told, some heart-warming others heart-breaking. There were also some precious moments when Roy and Elizabeth were honoured for their service to World Christian Ministries and recognition of two well-known ex-missionaries, Elsie Butler and Connie Blanche. A small exhibition area had stands from WEC, Columbia Child Care, Incare and Next Level International as well as information relating to the work of World Christian Ministries and David Prakasam's vision for India.

All in all David and Rachel appeared to have got the balance right for this first 'Inspiration4 Mission' Conference and we must hope that all those present will go back and tell their friends and encourage them to come back next year. Let us pray that more young families will be tempted to come with their children – a children's programme runs alongside every meeting – and that youth groups might be coaxed into coming to hear, first hand from missionaries and workers from other countries and so broaden their horizons and who knows, feel the call to the field. Next year's Conference again coincides with half term, 22nd to 26th of October and it will cost £240 which includes breakfast and an enormous evening meal as well as accommodation and conference fee. I'd book now if I were you as I'm sure the hotel will be over-subscribed as many will want to go. Full details from World Christian Ministries - 01803 663681 or e-mail Andrewdavid@wcm-online.co.uk

China

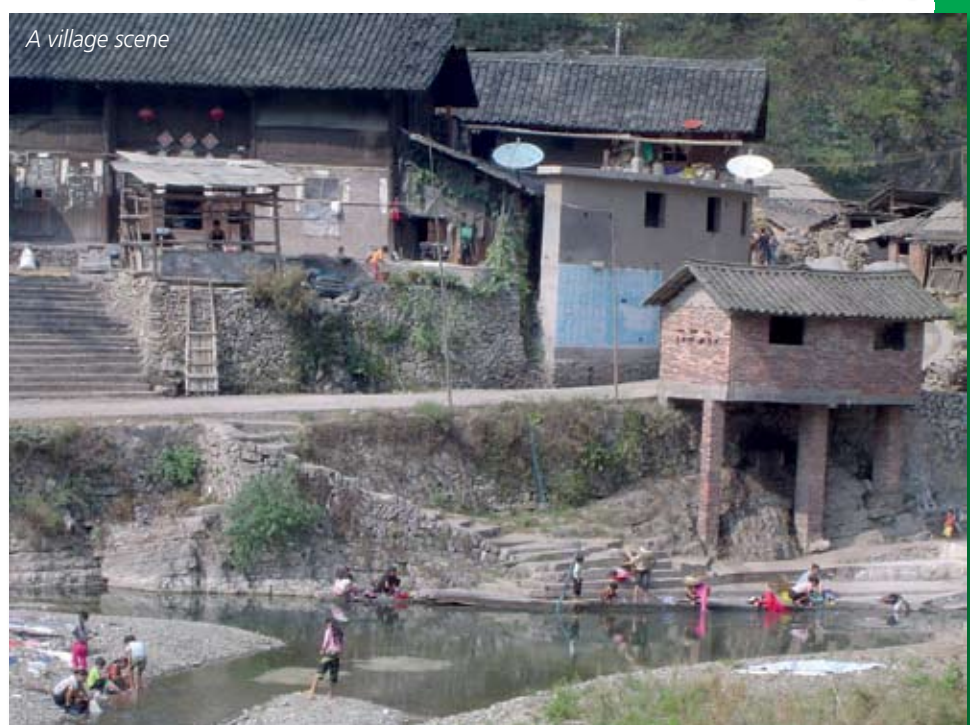
As you all will know we cannot ever reveal the identities of our workers in China due to the very real threat of expulsion and persecution of those left behind, but it's still good to hear what is going on even if we can't give recognition to those involved. Below are two different reports, one from an older couple who have just finished a two-year spell in South West China the other from someone still working in China and who's whereabouts, therefore, cannot be revealed.

A 'Foreign Expert' in South West China

The dirty, rattling old bus lurches out of the bus station only a few minutes late. It then dawdles through the noisy, smoke-filled city trying to pick up more passengers, many of whom waste time bargaining for a cheaper fare. Eventually we leave the city, the bus now filled to capacity with smoking, coughing chattering passengers, plus, of course, chickens, vegetables and all the other paraphernalia of Chinese everyday life. As usual the bus grinds along twisty mountain roads, a sheer drop to the river below. In true Chinese fashion the driver reckons that the best place to overtake is approaching a sharp bend or blind summit. It adds a bit more spice to the journey! Periodically he spits out of the window, as do several of the passengers, two of whom are leaning

out of the window being sick. By now you could turn herring into kippers in the bus atmosphere.

The scenery is breathtaking with the mountains, emerald green river and picturesque villages all around us. After an hour or so we arrive at our destination, a Minority village built on the side of a mountain, which is typical for this part of South West China. We struggle to get to the door, clambering through and over people, animals and belongings. At the entrance to the village is the shrine, and this one contains a small statuette and a lump of rock, painted gold. The villagers are very friendly and we begin to build up relationships through our Chinese friend and interpreter, who belongs to the same Minority Group. Taking



A village scene



Minority dress

photographs with a digital camera helps to bond us further. Soon we've been invited in for a meal - hot pot with sticky rice, chicken claws, vegetables, lots of chili plus other unidentified ingredients; best not to ask! Home brewed rice wine is enthusiastically pressed upon us, and it's only with difficulty we're able to decline. It is, after all, about as potent as rocket fuel. The house is wooden and the furniture sparse, but in the corner is satellite TV; during the course of the meal our host's mobile phone rings. Ah, the contrasts of life in modern day China. This is not the China of Beijing or Shanghai, but one of the poorest provinces. The majority of the population here are Minority People (overall only 7% of the population belongs to the Minorities) who are extremely friendly and helpful. In South West China (meaning Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi Provinces) the larger Minority groups have names like Zhuang, Miao, Dong, Shui, Gelao, and Bouyi, to name but a few. These groups are animistic and religious; they worship their ancestors, and may be Buddhists or Taoists etc. Unlike many parts of China where the gospel is spreading rapidly, less than 2% of these people groups can be called Christians.

There's no revival here, unlike in many other parts of the country. Progress with the Gospel comes slowly. Old religious and animistic customs are deeply ingrained and there's also fear of the authorities. Despite claims by the government that there is religious freedom, it is very limited. Meetings are only permitted in buildings licensed by the government which means that control rests with the 'Three Self Church'. Pastors are appointed by the authorities and must report regularly on all activities. There are, however, some very good churches, including some who are charismatic. One result of this is that believers are often afraid to meet together which means that their personal growth is slow. They are often too dependent on foreign leaders, and this poses many problems, not the least being that such

religious meetings are illegal. Another threat is that of cults, and the best known of these are Eastern Lightning and the Falun Gong. In addition there are many other weird and wonderful expressions, mainly due to the lack of good Bible teaching.

There is progress, however. In the last ten years or so some good indigenous churches have become established in some of the bigger cities. Even in the smaller towns and villages there is slow progress. Well known missionaries who have worked with the Minority Groups have included Samuel Pollard (Miao), John and Isobel Kuhn and James Fraser (Lisu), and the fruits of their labour can still be seen today.

So, what is needed?

- 1 Prayer is a priority to break the hold of religion, animism, (amongst the younger generation especially) atheism and the ever present threat of unsympathetic officials. Materialism is now rising to be one of the greatest strongholds of the enemy.
- 2 More workers. There is a desperate need for 'foreign experts' to assist in China's growth. These are teachers, engineers, medical personnel, IT people, in fact, just about anyone with a skill with some qualifications.

Can you respond to the challenge? Age is no barrier - the writer has just returned from a two year stint and now receives his State pension! It was an immensely fulfilling and enjoyable, if somewhat challenging experience.

'By all means...'

China is the second largest country in the world with a population of over 1,311,463,000. 'Millions' of people for whom Christ died. A land rich in many ways and with a growing economy. Spiritually there are many cults and organisations with ideas that pervade the thoughts of the people, and in the midst of it all, Chairman Mao is still there! A nation of people who know what it is to revere such a person and out of their respect, these qualities continue in the way in which they treat one another. However, in various parts of China, God has placed His people to share the love of Jesus



Burning paper money and incense for the ancestors

shown on the cross, and to understand the hearts of the Chinese people. One strategy that has opened up with good effect is to use the desire of the Chinese to learn English.

What is it like to learn a foreign language? In the West we do not always study languages as they do in other parts of the world, taking it for granted that 'they' will speak English. But, in China, young people especially are using every opportunity to learn English as their country grows in many different areas on the world stage. It is very important to be able to converse with the wider world community as the 'world' comes to China for whatever reason.

On a recent visit to this vast country it was interesting to be involved with an English Corner in one particular city and to share the enthusiasm of the students as they long to know more about the language and the culture. Why 'English Corner'? We all need that space to be ourselves, to know that we are accepted, and here, in these English Corners this is exactly what happens. Students are welcomed each evening with a good cup of coffee or some other drink – cold drinks especially during the hot summers – and then are made to feel as though they are in a 'family' as they sit around tables and talk about any subject they want, using only ENGLISH. Any subject: The English weather; The Royal Family; what is it like to live in rural England? What is it like to be a worker in a large city? Schools – what are they like in England? How many children are in a class in primary, junior or secondary school? What subjects are taught in schools? Family life. The towns and cities of England – their landmarks. Travelling around England. And, many, many more subjects too. And, RELIGION. Yes, this is something that so many of the young people (older ones too) are very interested in, and as questions are asked, doors of opportunity are opened to share about the love of Jesus. As Paul said, "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do this for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share in its blessings."

1 Corinthians 10: 11.

What does involvement in an English Corner entail? Just making coffee or tea or cold drinks and spending time talking only English with students. Is this working for Jesus? The answer is YES, as Jesus takes us as we are, and uses our talents and abilities for His glory. No foreign language is necessary in this 'Job description', only that the language of the love of Jesus be central to your life. Pray for those who have answered the call to work in an English Corner, that they will be encouraged as they use every opportunity to show the love of Jesus. "The harvest IS plentiful but the workers ARE few." Matthew 9 : 37. If you would like to be a little piece of England (or the UK, of course) in an English Corner, contact Susan Chalmers at World Ministries using the details on the inside front cover.

Global opportunities: South Africa

From Dave Russon

Having just returned from a visit to South Africa, I thought I would report on the visit and offer some opportunities that have arisen. Madeline, my wife, and I travelled with Paul and Carol Alexander to undertake various tasks. Of course Paul and Carol are



no strangers to South Africa and were due to be the guest speakers at the Africa School of Missions, which Paul had founded many years ago and is now a thriving college under the leadership Geoff Malan, principal and Carol's brother. The College provided our accommodation for our whole stay. This was graduation week and Paul was to address the students, which he undertook with his usual clarity and anointing. Madeline and my time here was for other purposes, mainly relationship building and fact finding, along with a pastoral visit to Loreen Newington of Emmanuel Press fame.

Emmanuel Press visit

The staff at Emmanuel Press, which is a literature outreach ministry, very warmly welcomed us and although the ministry has developed over the years it still has an amazing success story to tell. They receive over three thousand responses to their literature each month and over 5000 students are going on with the second stage of their correspondence course, which is sent out to those who have indicated that they have received the Lord through reading and responding to the tracts they had received. One wonders how such small premises and so few staff, with aging facilities, could achieve so much, which leads me to an opportunity...

Computer literate worker needed

This is a real opportunity to serve the Lord in a well-established ministry centre in White River, South Africa. Even though the staff have worked there for many years they still recognise that they need to move with the times and become Internet friendly. This could be your opening to serve the Lord in a very beautiful part of the World in a unique ministry.





Visit to Loreen Newington

Loreen is the other half of the late David that created a wonderful partnership in the Gospel for many years. She has suffered a stroke and this has robbed her of some of her faculties, which means that she has to live in a care home for the elderly. We were warned that she may not recognise or respond to us because of her failing health. You see, I remember this couple from my boyhood and they are some of my heroes, especially with the great example that they set. So what were we to expect? What was awaiting us? We need not have feared because she responded so well, smiling, crying, nodding and affirming. We hugged and prayed and encouraged and even with the restrictions we came away incredibly blessed. We felt we wanted to honour such a great warrior and so we decided that we would give a gift to Emmanuel Press in her and David's honour. We found that their computers were years out of date so we purchased, on behalf of World Ministries, a brand new computer system along with printer and up to date programmes. She loved our visit and we were so pleased to have had the opportunity to be with her.

Village clinic

One of the great challenges of the 21st Century is the HIV AIDS pandemic. Africa School of Mission have recognised that the gospel is Spiritual and practical and have set out to make a difference. Setting up clinics and children's programmes bringing care to a hurting community. We were taken to see what was being done for this community from men and women dying with AIDS to children who had been orphaned by this dreadful disease. To justify the subject this needs many an article not just a note but to suffice we were greatly moved and that leads to other

State Registered Nurse required

This is an opportunity for a Christian nurse who has a passion to make a difference in a ministry that is pioneering in this great field of caring for the oppressed.

General Practitioner required

Same as above. This will not bring the financial rewards that a practise in the UK could bring but it's a ministry that will reap eternal rewards and the alleviation of suffering of thousands of people who need to see Christ in you.

Short-term practical team

The mobile clinic meets in a dilapidated farm building that needs such a lot of work to make it more hygienic and we need to build a play park for the children. All of this could be done in a couple of weeks and the fulfilment of the mission would be reward in itself.

The scripture says "make the most of every opportunity because the days are evil". It's time to wake up to the need and offer yourself to become the hero of faith that God intended you to be.

Churches in

Living Word Christian Centre, Paisley

Since starting this little series about churches that are involved in mission I have not ceased to be surprised at the difference of those churches yet their one similarity, a heart to tell the whole world about Jesus. They may carry out that task in differing ways but essentially they are linked into the Great Commission in some way. The Living Word Christian Centre is no different as you will see below. Where does your church stand? Why not let me know.

When was the church started and by whom? The church was pioneered in 1985 by Pastor John Fletcher on his return from Australia.

What was the fellowships first involvement with Missions and when? We have always been involved in mission but more so in the last ten years.

Have there been any missionaries sent out from the church? We have sent out two families, one to Indonesia, the other to Morocco.

Current size of fellowship? We have around 150 + at this point in time.

What is your current missions involvement and is it country oriented or people oriented? We are currently involved in six countries: Indonesia, Morocco, Kenya, Burundi, Moldova and Tanzania.

School of Mission 2006

World Ministries has been running a School of Missions for several years and this was the second year of the new format and held at Mattersey Bible College. This course is run at the same time as the Masters on site lectures and means that those in the School of Mission can interact with those who have travelled from across the world.

A great partnership is being established between *World Ministries* and the Staff at the Bible College, which can only be a benefit for the future of World Evangelisation.

The general feed back from the participants was that it was an excellent course. The participants were made up of two groups (a) those who were accepted as *World Ministries* applicants (b) those from local churches with an interest in missions.

The main aim of the course is to help prepare those who are intending to serve the Lord overseas under the oversight of *World Ministries*. It is also there to inspire those who have a general interest in mission and so there are two main

Mission



Do you welcome missionaries on itinerary? Yes, we do but due to our already heavy commitment to various mission endeavours we cannot always promise support although we are always interested in what people are doing around the world.

Do you hold special events, days dedicated to missions? Yes. Next May we are holding an African day and will be bringing three pastors and their wives over from Kenya, Burundi and Tanzania.

Do you have a missions secretary? Yes, Susan Fletcher currently looks after our mission programme in the church and William McCallum is mission secretary for the Scottish Region.

Do you have or a missions team? We try to involve many from the church and send out teams of six on 'mercy' missions and three or four on 'teaching' missions. A team has just returned from Tanzania, Kenya and Burundi and there are already two teams of six booked for next year to Tanzania and Kenya

How do you fund your mission programme? We begin with a percentage of our offerings and supplement this with both special offerings and individual support, the money being kept in a separate missions account.

Now the hard one – can you give me a quote as to what you think is the value of being involved in missions for a fellowship? Our foundational verse is Acts 1:8, so "going to the uttermost parts" is part of our DNA. The fact that 15% – 20% of our income goes to Missions demonstrates how important we take that calling. Our main objectives are native villages, AIDS hospitals and orphanages as well as a teaching ministry. We have found that as we reach out to the helpless and hope-less, God takes care of the 'Home Front'. We see ourselves as a local church touching the nations.

agendas. One to prepare people for a particular place of service, the other is to gain a wider perspective on World Mission.

A testimony from one of the candidates for ministry in Asia Edward Allen says "This has been an Amazing course, The group has really gelled together so well and the teaching has been of an amazingly high standard and frequently, extremely relevant to the work and life I am moving in to. The hospitality was extraordinary; the students working there were simply amazing."

Denise Wright commented that "The course had been a tremendous blessing, and was probably the best three weeks of my Christian walk. The teaching has been encouraging; it has given me insight and knowledge. Each session has had meaning and the devotions a great blessing. The Directors sharing experiences from around the world have been inspiring. I will recommend the course to many people so expect an influx for next year. I have received confirmations and the Lord has spoken prophetically into my life. I now feel more confident and equipped to speak on missions. Thanks so much for enriching my life in God."

Stella is a church missions secretary who came on to the course and says "I don't intend to be a long Term missionary but work from the local church and support missions. The thought did cross my mind should there be a separate course for people like me but that would have robbed me of being with prospective missionaries, the blend has worked very well. The balance of the lectures and content has been very beneficial. Friendships built and fellowship was God ordained made the whole experience has developed my hope in God. Hospitality has been excellent and good food. It would be good if a short-term mission was available (as an optional) so the lessons learned could be put into practise. Having pastoral care from host directors, has been delightful, they did an excellent job. I feel more enlightened and equipped because of the course, thank you so much."

We from the World ministries team were very happy with the course and feel it would benefit many more. The next course will be held from 28th August – 14th September why don't you plan to be there and become enlightened and equipped for mission.



Comment

Well another year has flown by and a new one has begun. I have to say, however, the 2006 was the quietest year I have experienced with Incare for which we can be thankful and give praise to God; there were no major disasters or tragedies although I am aware that, what we might consider a minor tragedy, is major to those involved but on the world scene we didn't have another tsunami or asian earthquake to contend with. And so, apart from a busy start to the year when I visited Sudan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand, it has been quite a peaceful time, relatively speaking. I have managed a few church visits (not enough), squeezed in a couple of holidays, the AoG Conference, the World Christian Ministries Conference (a must for everyone in 2007) and spent a great deal of time on this magazine - I never realised how much effort is needed to put together CoMission, what with having to chase people all the time for their stories and photos and then cut and paste the whole lot together. Still it's great fun and worth it. My diary for 2007 looks to start busy with a couple of trips planned for January/February the latter being our return to Adoor, the village in Sudan where we are working to improve the lives of the villagers, spiritually and practically. We're taking a larger team this time, six in all including two ladies. Only God knows what else may occur in 2007 but you can rest assured that whatever happens, Incare will be ready to respond on your behalf. Thank you for all your support in 2006 and in the years before that - Incare is nothing without all you good people of our Assemblies of God. Thanks

Hope Village, Sri Lanka *revisited*

It's the rainy season. The sun pops out now and again between torrential rain making driving conditions more difficult than usual and just adds to the slow progress. The constant army and police checkpoints don't help either, but it's only to be expected as we are heading for Tamil Tiger country and in recent weeks there has been sporadic fighting between the Tigers and Government troops especially in the area of Batticaloa where we have been concentrating our post-tsunami work. I am assured, however, by my host Dr. Sam Thevabalasingham, that there are no problems near Hope Village, our main destination. It's still raining when we arrive in Batticaloa and it's good to meet up with my good friend, Joseph, proprietor of The Avonlea Inn, the guest house we always stay in when we're up here. He has improved it since March when I was last here, he has added two more rooms and the garden is looking more full and pretty. It's a nice place, homely and friendly - and cheap! And, if I was here on holiday, is only 10 minutes from the beach and 20 from the



Our 'home' in Batticaloa

town centre. The place was damaged by the Tsunami and is a testament to Joseph's ability and determination that he has renovated it and turned it into such a nice place to stay. He's a great cook as well (if you like curry, of course).

I had arrived in Colombo, the capital, the previous day and had journeyed into the interior, up the mountains with their hills covered in tea plantations, to a place called Norton Bridge where Dr. Sam runs a Bible School with a difference. The South Asia Institute of Theology is a unique, unconventional school where class room and practical work go hand in hand. The aim is to provide a balanced 'in service' training for those who are already involved in the Lord's work as evangelists, pastors or Bible women. They are in a classroom five days a month and the remainder of the time out on the field where the theory can be put into practice. The vision is to equip Christian men and women from rural areas so that they can reach the lost and plant churches in their own locations; a church in every village. It was started as the Rural Pastors Training School in 1989 in Colombo and moved to the current location a year later. Norton Bridge is beautiful sitting as it does high up in the mountains surrounded by lush green tropical growth, trees and streams and even waterfalls not too far away. It is always a privilege to visit and speak to the students many of whom travel great distances (not measured in kilometres but in time) to come and learn and take their knowledge back to their village. The travelling for them is horrendous by our standards - three of them accompanied us on our journey to Batticaloa as we were going near to their homes so I had first hand knowledge of the difficulties they have to face, sometimes getting upwards of four or five busses (a journey on one would put an end to me, believe me!).

The next day in Batticaloa we headed for Hope Village1 where we had provided eight houses in the complex of 20. These are nearing completion and should be fully occupied early in 2007. It was good to see the playground equipment that I gave the go-ahead for on my last visit in use as well as the foundations and early walls of the proposed community hall/church. The village has been promised electricity within three months which will enable the project to be completed much quicker. However the main purpose of today's visit was the opening of the first five houses in Hope Village 2, just a few yards away, for which Incare purchased the land on my last trip. The opening ceremony included a Government representative for the first time and a senior member of the Chartered Institute of Management who had provided the funds for the five houses. There are also another 15 houses under construction and eventually there should be 20 more as well as a small conference centre/utility hall.



*Top: The community hall will soon be built
Centre: The children's play area is fully functional
Bottom: Hope Village II is well underway*

⇒ ⇒ Later that day we had a planning meeting and I committed Incare to completing Hope Village 1 which will entail building a perimeter wall and drainage ditch to keep out animals, providing a water storage tank (there are already several wells with pumps) to provide running water to every house and the church, landscaping the communal lands with a pond(!) and helping each household with their own private gardens. This will probably be the end of our involvement with this project although we have made funds available to purchase another 10 acres of land which will be used for the growing of coconuts and cashew nuts. They did ask me for one more thing - money to buy land for a cemetery! It appears there isn't one for Christians in this mainly Hindu area. I'm awaiting costs and I'll keep you all informed of this very out-of-the-ordinary request. Sadly my trip was very brief this time but I shall return sometime in the spring, you are most welcome to come with me. In fact why don't you take a look at the little advert (right) and give me a ring.

Short term mission? Fancy helping finish off newly built homes for victims of the Tsunami? Hope Village in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka could be just the place for you. Incare is looking to put together a team of about nine people to go and help with painting and decorating, gardening, maybe some general building duties. It will be around April/May and will cost in the region of about £600 for two weeks depending on flights, of course and the number coming. Let me know if you, or your church, are interested. By the way the beach is within walking distance of the village and we'll allow plenty of time for leisure.

Romania

New premises for Vis de Copil

Last autumn, I did a report on Romania having been back there for the first time in a couple of years. Part of that article featured some friends who run a charity called Vis de Copil – a child's dream. I've just had an update from Kat and Ken which I am pleased to share with you.

Sadly they had had to return to the UK after the loss of Ken's mother but they are now back in Arad from where Kat writes:

"As always we have been very busy since our return and our latest member of the family, Rosanna (who will be 7 in a couple of weeks) keeps us on our toes... She was very much abused in her past life and takes up a lot of our time and energy but she is very cute and does stop talking when she sleeps... well, most of the time.

After over two years of searching we finally found the perfect house for a day centre. Our specifications were proving almost impossible to find – it had to be a reasonable size, a house rather than an apartment, a private courtyard, right in the city centre (for easy access by children and our volunteers) and not ridiculously expensive (property prices here have rocketed in the past five years) The need for a centre is very great. We hope to offer shower and clothes washing facilities, some basic education, counselling, first aid and basic medical help and hot meals... obviously all depending on staff, volunteers, funding etc... but we're really excited about

it. As the weather gets colder and winter arrives it's always the street people and slum and shanty dwellers who suffer the most. With a day centre we will be able to help more people than we can at the moment. Also distribution of toiletries, clothes or whatever else we are able to offer will be so much easier with a centre to use as a base.

The picture shows the front view of the house from the road. It is on a wee narrow street right in the city centre parallel with the main boulevard, just one block behind it. The house is not huge but is adequate for our needs and the best thing about it is that it has its own private courtyard. In Arad the houses are almost always in a shared courtyard – very nice for residential purposes but for a day centre for street kids totally unsuitable! We love it. We have signed the initial 'ante-contract' and paid an advance of 4,500 euros, with another 84,500 to pay by the 22nd December and the other 30,000 by 15th February. At the point of signing we had no idea where the money would come from but believed this was the place for our centre. We still don't know where all the money's coming from but we already have over half the total sum... to say we are amazed would be an understatement... needless to say it is a great encouragement to our faith and a confirmation that God wants these children to have a place to come to during the day." **Ken and Kat can be contacted by e-mail on kat@rdslink.ro**



House fire tragedy in Sintana

Just before going to press we received details of a personal tragedy in the village of Sintana, Romania. Pastor Aurel Ardeu e-mailed us with news that a family in the village had suffered a fire which had completely destroyed their house and all its contents. The family, parents and 12 children, are being cared for by other members of the village, all of whom are desperately poor themselves, and by Aurel's church. The house will have to be demolished and rebuilt in the spring as weather conditions won't allow it sooner. They have no money, no insurance and no hope. If you would like to help please send cheques, made payable to 'AoG - Incare' to the finance department at Nottingham and mark them 'Sintana Fire' on the back.





Burkina Faso

A clean-shaven Arthur Shivas tels of his recent trip to Bama:

As you can see from my photograph I carried out my plan to shave off my beard and moustache (see last CoMission) which raised in excess of £2,700 for the Bama school project. A week later I travelled to Burkina Faso with my wife, Susan, to visit the school to set up the 'Sponsor a child' scheme as well as deliver the sponsorship money. Our first day was spent meeting with the Parents Association discussing the practicalities of setting up the scheme and meeting the children. It was great to see the new first year classroom filled with 66 children – all of whom have been sponsored so that they can attend. The sponsorship comes from individuals (mainly in the Watford fellowship) as well as a local primary school that is beginning to forge a relationship with the Bama School. The next day was spent photographing the children as well as recording their details – which provided us with an insight into family life in this predominately Muslim area where polygamy exists. It was refreshing to see the joy on the children's faces now they are able to attend school. On our final day we attended a meeting with all the parents who wanted to thank us for what we are doing to help them educate their children. The thing that stands out for me is what one parent said as he thanked us for being people of our word. I had met him and his four children 20 months ago when I first visited the site in response to his comment that it was nice to see a school being built, but he wouldn't be able to afford to send his children to school. I promised that they would be able to go to school, and his first child is in the new class. Our aim is to widen the sponsorship scheme so that other fellowships can get involved in this worthwhile expression of God's love – awaiting our return was news that four other AOG fellowships have expressed an interest. To find out more about this please contact me at Watford Community Church 01923 331382 or Arthur@Watfordcommunitychurch.org In the long term we also need to raise more funds to extend the school building; as it stands it will be full in 18 months and we need to double the capacity, so I am looking to raise a further £10,000 for the next phase.



As well as the school project, I also spent some time with my Incare hat on dealing with a proposal to drill a well in the village of Farakoba. In the past we have had problems with money being handed over without any guarantee of water being found so my conversations could have been interesting to say the least. Thankfully this was not the case and the contract that has been signed ensures that only 15% of the price is advanced prior to water being found. More importantly when it was announced to the village that a well was to be dug their uncontrolled joy broke out in the service and the women praised God for the next five hours because they realised the significance that this would have on their daily lives. To sit under the stars with the local Pastor and the village elders as they expressed their gratitude for the generosity of AOG was truly a once in a lifetime experience. All in all it was an amazing trip and we returned convinced that God will continue to use us in this part of Africa to see His Kingdom come to the people who live there.

Incare is the International Care and Relief Department of the Assemblies of God Incorporated, a company limited by guarantee (No. 2873415) registered in England and having its registered office at Ruddington Fields Country Park, Mere Way, Ruddington Nottingham NG11 6JS and is a registered charity (No. 1032245)

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Please note:

If the response to any appeal is greater than the amount requested the surplus will be allocated to a similar need.

Director and Incare News

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The children of Bama

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