

binbilla

issue no. 9

welcome to the...

SUMMER EDITION

*...to bring us
together, for
mutual support and
encouragement, and
to provide a context
for maintaining our
engagement in
global mission...*

Welcome to this 2011 summer edition! It features three engaging stories.

Dr Betty Andersen's contribution to the work of Global Interaction spans half a century, beginning with her missionary service in the Indian sub-continent and, for several decades thereafter, in leadership and other roles at a state and national level in Australia. Betty has a wonderful memory for detail, great analytical skills and gritty determination. Her story encapsulates part of her fascinating pilgrimage.

Grace Munro is well known to all our readers for her distinguished service in Zambia – in multiple areas – and her work as the Global Interaction Publications Officer for a period of 17 years from 1990. Amongst other things, Grace was widely appreciated for her skillful writing, in-depth research and prolific output. Her article in this issue is written with characteristic candor, insight and sensitivity. It is very moving – and challenging.

Rob and Win Thomson's delightful account of their family visit to Papua New Guinea (PNG) is the first contribution to *Binbilla* from the contingent of New Zealand Baptist missionaries who served with Global Interaction in PNG and the province of West Papua (formerly Irian Jaya) in Indonesia. It highlights the value of enduring relationships between former missionaries and the people amongst whom they served. The Thomson's story is typically whimsical and heart-warming. You will enjoy it!

We draw the attention of our Tasmanian and Victorian readers to the **Binbilla Day Conference** to be held in Melbourne on Saturday 12 March. The details appear later in this issue.

Binbilla is an aboriginal word for a vine. It connotes the idea of "grape vine", network and connected.

CHRIS PITTENDRIGH & ROSALIND GOODEN

Co-coordinators

grace MONRO

Grace Munro served with Global Interaction in Zambia from 1973 to 1990 and in the national office in Australia, as the Publications Officer, from 1990 to 2008. Grace is currently the Administrator at the Kew Baptist Church in Melbourne.



A young woman at my church recently asked how I had experienced God's guidance. I didn't find it easy to answer her.

A case could well be made that I ended up in Zambia because of family-related issues – to be a nurse (there weren't too many options for girls then); to be single (my mother gave a usually subtle message that singleness was a better form of Christianity); to be a missionary (definitely portrayed a 'real' service!); to go to Africa (more distant than other relatives' service, so maybe better!)

But was that all there was to the story?

As a child, books on Africa were influential – Jungle Doctor books, The White Queen of Okiyong. I always had the sense that Africa was the direction – though that didn't transfer into learning about it. Later, as a Bible College Student interested in mission, my Pastor suggested I talk to ABMS. I didn't even know whether ABMS had work in Africa, and when I was told they did, had no idea of Zambia's location!

From there, my path led me from the Melbourne Bible Institute to the South Australian Baptist Theological College, supposedly to ensure that I had my 'Baptist' ideas straight (though it meant I missed out on Missiology and Baptist Principles!) In early 1973, I moved to Zambia to work in the Fiwale Hill Rural Health Centre.

To go back, at school and in nursing, I was an average student. I didn't fail – but I didn't excel. I was hampered by a low self-image. My academic achievements improved when I did midwifery and at Bible and Theological College, but I always felt I was just a single, very small, step away from failure. I had very low expectations of what I could do. Often, I fulfilled those expectations. I enjoyed the midwifery side of nursing in Zambia, but struggled with the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses, as was required. I found it hard to cope with having 40 – 50 patients waiting at the outpatients' door. I struggled with fear of failure, and anger.

Over the next few years, God led me into new areas of ministry.

My only previous experience with language learning was some college Greek and Hebrew. So, when in South Australia an interviewer asked me, "How do you think you might go with language learning?" I said, "I don't know; I've never learned a spoken language." Our Principal, Gerry Ball, rocked with laughter at that! He obviously had greater confidence than I had. Two years in Zambia, and I moved out of nursing and into helping new staff with language learning, and women's work with the churches of the Northern Baptist Association of Zambia (NBAZ).

Later, I was appointed the Secretary of the Mission team. I, and probably everyone else, saw this as a short-term, fill in position until the males (it was always a male role) returned from furlough. Instead, I learned that I had administrative gifts – and have been the secretary of almost every group I've been part of since then.

My work with the church also changed, with more teaching and administration. When ABMS and NBAZ decided to start a new mission base at Malambanyama in the Central Province in the late 1980s, the intention was that another person lead the mission team, but that didn't work out, and I was sent. A senior national Pastor was the team leader, but much of the decision-making responsibility fell to me.

At this time, depression hit me hard, probably due to long-term self-image problems, years of working too hard, family dynamics, unresolved anger and work stress. I now felt I had taken that one small step to failure. By 1990, it seemed right to leave Zambia, though I had no idea what job options were ahead – my nursing qualifications didn't equip me for what I now did, and I was still depressed.

In Perth on my way home, I received a call from the head office, "Would you consider becoming our Publications' Officer?" Apart from submitting articles to Vision magazine, I had absolutely no qualifications or experience! Someone, probably Chris Pittendrigh, had more faith in me than I had. With trepidation I eventually said yes – and remained in that position for 17 years. The learning curve was very steep, but God surprised me by enabling me to do something which I never dreamed was possible.

Over time, the depression began to lift. I had begun to study for a theological degree, partly because I still needed to prove to myself that I was capable of doing it.

To my total surprise, soon after, I found that my faith had gone. This was not a case of thinking through the issues and reaching the conclusion that I didn't believe. Rather, suddenly, I found I no longer believed anything on which my life had been built. It was unbelievably frightening. I remained in the church – but only because it was even more scary outside of it. I felt so hypocritical. I was writing about mission. I was studying theology. But I had no foundation for what I was doing. Thankfully, my pastors at the time, Dennis Brennan and Rod Cairns, were accepting and encouraging as I walked this really difficult road.

It took a long time and is an ongoing journey even now, but gradually I rediscovered faith, though in a different form. I don't 'know' God as well as I thought I did. There are many more things I don't know; very few things of which I am certain. I'm learning that God is far too big for us to define or explain. I'm learning more of God's love. Beneath all my uncertainties, God is there and has everything under his control, and that is enough.

My most recent lessons, about God's timing, have come in the past three years. For various reasons I had become unsettled at Global Interaction, and in 2008 became administrator at my home church, Kew. I had been there almost a year when Rod Pell, former GIA missionary and our pastor, was diagnosed with Myeloma. A short time later, his health began to fail and he concluded in ministry early in 2010. He died in November. I learned a great deal from Rod. Because I had been secretary of the church for many years, and, now, having had time in the Administrator role, I have been able to work with others to help the church travel this part of the journey. God's timing was perfect.

How do I know God's guidance? Mostly, I am very uncertain about that. Joy Cowley, in her book Aotearoa Psalms, asks the question, "If a tree were capable of reflection, would it have doubts about its growth? Would it worry endlessly about the direction it should take, or when it should produce new leaves?"

She compares the tree's growth to ours, and says, "Just as I imagine that I'm acting out of confusion, I stop still and look back on my journey until now."

What do I see?

*From my birth to the present time
there is clear, straight path.
Everything I thought was a deviation,
everything I counted as unnecessary,
missed, wasted, wrong, foolish,
is a part of that straight path.
I see that an infinitely loving God
has used every thread of my life
to weave a perfect fabric of truth.
Don't ask me how.*

She concludes the poem saying that,

*In awe, I surrender my confusion,
knowing only these two things:
that as long as I choose to grow,
my loving God will take care
of the other choices in my life;
and that as a tree must grow toward light,
so I must grow towards God.*

Actually, much of the time, I'm not sure that I have made 'the choice to grow' – I seem to drift along much of the time. But God continues to lead me toward light.

Aotearoa Psalms: Prayers of a New People, 1995, Pleroma Christian Supplies, Ltd.



my pilgrimage in miss

The journey covers a multitude of memories and experiences, rich and enduring relationships with fellow workers and nationals, growth as a person, trying to see life through others eyes and in discovering that God is always bigger than my understanding of Him.

My pilgrimage in mission had its earliest beginnings in childhood. My pastor at Haberfield, Rev J H Deane, made it quite clear that the reality of being church, was its mission heart. Because of the involvement of my family with the Australian Baptist Foreign Mission (ABFM), missionaries and candidates were frequent visitors to our home and returned missionaries, like Flo Harris and Helen Cousins, kept the call to mission involvement alive. Looking back, I understand that God was planting a seed in my heart through them.

Miss Cousins approached me as a young child to collect weekly small amounts (sixpence) from church members I would recruit. The funds were to support pastor training of a Bengali, Dhoroni Babu, from Gobindisari. Little did I perceive what impact this particular work would have on me. My mother, and other mothers, belonging to mission support groups would attend farewell meetings, and go to the wharf or the train station to 'send off' outgoing staff. I too would be taken to join them.

In my early teens, word came from the Field of the tragic drowning of Edna and Cyril Moore and Ron Potter. They had been travelling with Flo Horward, to dedicate the church at Gobindisari. The Moores had gone to Bengal from the Haberfield church and were close to my family; Edna had been my Sunday school teacher. A memorial service was led by Rev J. H. Deane who concluded his address with the words, Called, Consecrated, Crowned. He challenged the gathering, saying, 'would two more from the church be open to respond to God's call'. For me, this challenge was personal and without any doubt.

Wise counsel was given to both of us who responded, clearly providing the way forward. We were to be thorough in ongoing study, sincere and open in seeking guidance, and training. I was given the great commission verse, to remember as an affirmation, guide and a promise. David Stewart, a neighbour had also responded. Our ministry paths were to cross years later at Mt Hermon, Darjeeling.

Holding three nursing certificates, I hoped to serve in the future Birisiri Hospital. In early 1954 my application to the NSW Mission Council led to an interview. Their recommendation to ABFM Board was to accept me as a candidate for training. The outcome of Board deliberation was to prove a disappointment, as the final decision was deferred for one year due to financial constraints!

After eleven years' preparation, yet another delay! In hindsight, this delay proved timely, and taught another important lesson! With Board approval in 1955, two years were spent at the Victorian Baptist Training Institute, in the Moore, Potter Memorial Hostel. My outgoing was approved in 1957 by the Board. The news was not all perfect; my appointment was to Baghpara, Assam, not Birisiri!

Before outgoing, I remember wondering, 'would I succeed at language study and survive the heat?' Leaving family was made more difficult when my mother collapsed on the wharf. I could do nothing but carry that image as the distance increased between us. Mum was to die two months before my return on furlough.

Orders were received for the ship to re-route to Jakarta to pick up Dutch nationals being expelled. I still recall my reactions to armed troops on the wharf and overhead surveillance by air force planes.

Arrival at Bombay was complicated by industrial action. The ship berthed mid-harbour, preventing the workers leaving the ship and led

*Dr Betty Andersen served with Global Interac
In the intervening years Betty has had a significant
a state and national level.*

to our descent down the side, carrying our cabin luggage, onto a lighter shore bound. Anxiety increased approaching the unknown. The two of us, as newcomers, would normally have travelled with an experienced missionary. We had no money, language or advice about how to proceed. Ascending the steps to the wharf, rescue came when a man addressed me by name!

He brought peace, making all arrangements, advancing money and saw us onto the Calcutta train. This was to take two nights and days. Our travelling companion, an Indian lady, warned us about the hazard of letting anyone in. What she failed to say was that her servant would come at each stop during the night, bang on the door to check on her! She left us the next morning to continue alone. Our next expectation about escort from Calcutta, during the two days travel to Bongaigaon, failed. To manage ourselves, meant learning how many coolies to hire at what rate because mid-way a change to a boat crossing preceded joining another train. My impressions centred on the crowds, noise, the unknown and a deep feeling of being a 'foreigner.'

In reality, beginning this final journey was almost my 'undoing'. Despite being years since partition, refugees still lived on Calcutta platforms, sleeping, cooking, toileting etc. To cover the distance to our compartment meant stepping over, or around them and by the end I felt really out of my depth, crying out in my heart, "Lord I can't do this on my own!" A response was immediate with an overwhelming sense of God's presence and a reminder of the words, "Lo I am with you always" being true and therefore, I was not alone. It was no reproof but a gentle reminder.

Learning to trust local train guards would develop, but some English ladies in another compartment had seen our hesitations. In the middle of the night they called out to us to change trains then. We bundled up luggage (including my 6ft, inflated li-lo) joined them on the platform only to be advised by the guard, not to change here, warning the train would depart soon! Whom to believe? Fortunately we jumped back in and the train left. I had a disturbed journey till arriving at the river, and made a successful crossing. Finding our names on a carriage door we settled to complete the final train journey.

From Bongaigaon, I expected transport to Baghpara. Not so! Arrangements had changed due to the Big Meetings being held at Tukrajhar. A Calcutta, Bengali preacher was to address the large gathering and we were to join them, sitting cross-legged on the ground for hours on end. Commencement formalities included our introduction and welcome, requiring a response. What an introduction after four days train travel.



betty ANDERSEN



*on in India and Bangladesh from 1957 to 1970.
ant involvement in Global Interaction both at*

We did, however, hear very good Bengali from the speaker. I sat next to Flo Horward so I could ask her the meaning of words as I heard them. It wasn't encouraging to hear the speaker use three different words for 'one'. Would I ever succeed with language?

At lunch, hungry, travel weary and overwhelmed, my bible reading again organised my priorities. How was this passage timed for to-day? "You have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained that you go forth, bring forth fruit and the fruit shall remain" Now, not only assured of His presence, but of being where I was meant to be trusting God with the outcomes.

A few days later, I reached Baghpara, was welcomed as the nurse for the Dispensary. An interpreter was my means of interviewing patients. Ironically, my Bengali language study was done with the help of a Garo

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in Assam! My first patient call-out came at night. Carrying a hurricane lamp, and with the support of an experienced missionary, the problem was investigated though initially, with doubts. He actually had a large cockroach deeply embedded in his ear canal. To my surprise, the outcome was good giving relief to the near-demented man and my reputation, no harm.

Attending Darjeeling Language School for three months was required. It was good meeting and sharing with colleagues and people from different countries and missions. Easter morning was an example as we worshipped together on One Tree Point. From here we could hear across the valley a Ghurkha regiment playing the bagpipes! Intensive language study was interspersed with social and recreational activities.

I learnt to play volley ball on the edge of the mountainside and joined acclimatising walking challenges preparatory for a ninety mile, eight day trek mid-term to view Everest from 12,000 feet.

We set out into the mist with back pack and umbrella but two days of tropical rain made climbing hard and talking impossible. The views were non-existent, our spirits very low, and breathing, more difficult. At day's end without hope, slumped in our bungalow, the chowkidar knocked, announcing, Everest! Our aches and miseries, forgotten when gazing around 'swept clear' panorama everywhere, revealing Makalu and Everest alight with sunset colours and nearby Kangchenjunga 'wearing' a rainbow! How close we came to missing that transforming wonder, needing to pause, lesson learnt. Later, walking through forests on carpets of fallen rhododendron flowers was some experience. Language School routines seemed distant.

Life back at Baghpara continued till the end of the year when I transferred to East Pakistan. Here I would concentrate on language. Timing of the move was not good as Martial Law had been declared there and my first night was spent under curfew as some indiscriminate rifle fire, (shooting stray dogs), had penetrated some village houses.

More intensive language learning and culture acquisition became possible and I had the privilege of sharing accommodation with the Balls in a house built under Ellen Arnold's direction. This year ended an era of our history, witnessing the hand over of the Comilla work to the Americans. We moved on to Birisiri.

Transfer to Birisiri meant more than a move. Here was a new ethnic group, new customs and Australian colleagues. Having passed final language exams, attaining 'full status', I could work with and learn from experienced colleagues and committed, competent nationals. Work meant acquiring more about recognising and treating tropical diseases, social mores and economics and developing a new 'mind set'. The incidence of T.B. infections was disturbing, especially when local friends became patients and some village folk could not sustain lengthy treatment regimes. I recall the pleasure of helping a young, untrained Garo gain some nursing skills and share her joy also, following her baptism.

Passing language exams didn't mean I would not make mistakes. My worst then was to confuse an outpatient (and give my colleagues a good laugh) when I told him to 'eat his old woman, three times a day!' The difference, between old woman and tablet, was a vowel.

A year after obtaining 'full-status' I had to forward a work report to Melbourne. Attempting this task was a growth experience in my spiritual journey, understanding about the core of mission. I struggled with the content because it seemed I was not engaged in evangelism, only doing what I might do if nursing at home. How did this equate



1. The first four trainees at Joyramkura
2. Baptism of one of the trainees
3. Fleeing Garos, refuge on hospital verandahs
4. Training nurse aid at Birisiri

betty ANDERSEN continued...

with 'being a missionary'? Facing this dilemma, an inner 'prompting' answered my question. "It's not what you do so much as what I can do through others too, when you play your part in obedience, being who you are, where I want you." The underlying principle to grasp was that the ultimate initiative was God's achieving His purposes through us in partnership. Perhaps this lesson should have registered back on day one in Assam. In later years, another reminder from Jeremiah, 29:11 reinforced the promise that plans for me and my ministry were timely and in safe hands!

Along with everyday activities, unexpected threatening experiences occur. Often these were associated with travel. Departure around 3:00 a.m. was not unusual and a bedding roll opened in the train, provided reasonable sleep. The train was delayed till dawn with no sleep option. This providence saved my life as, at home, unpacking the roll revealed a deadly krait snake in my bedding! My second challenge was an encounter with two cyclones around mid-night on board a paddle steamer mid-river. Anchors at both ends couldn't hold the vessel and the search light revealed only swirling masses of particles in the air around us. Passengers below decks were screaming and the male passengers up top were predicting outcomes. There were no life boats, jackets or wireless. I wondered who would realise what had happened to me?

Monsoonal floods were sometimes expected, usually with warning. My work colleagues were away and our rainfall was very light. To my surprise looking out from the dispensary, I saw a body of water, like a river, rushing along where our elevated road to Jaria, used to stand. The banks of our river were breached, next to our compound, by an inundation from the mountains beyond. My first such experience, no boats or phones and people needing care called for instant planning. Quickly the water level rose in the compound affecting open wells, lapping the top steps of our house making transferring medicines and equipment to our house difficult. The national leaders organised bagging of the river near our houses saving us from a potential roof-top refuge. Many in the nearby village and some of our services were affected. However, the lasting consequence of this isolating flood was the decision to not build the hospital at Birisiri.

It was thrilling to return to Joyramkura after home leave where building of the hospital had just begun. Over time, lasting friendships and work relationships were strengthened despite many emergencies. Recruiting and appointing the first four trainees was a privilege and later seeing them graduate was a joy. Piroj, a trained nurse joined the team early in 1963 and later, Lola's return was great. Word spread quickly that an Australian doctor was in residence, bringing patients and creative treatment improvisation. Sadly, a drowned toddler was beyond our help.

Before the official opening and unveiling of the dedication plaque by 'Prof.' Morling, I recall the Garo man who received ticket No.1 as an 'inpatient'. He needed admission and an anaesthetic to correct a dislocation. The store room was the only available room to carry out his treatment then. The procedure provided a good opportunity for the new trainees to observe. As a rice beer drinker he was resistant to anaesthetics and of the trainees, only one stayed to the end.

In the following years the plight of many patients inevitably moved us. Some stand out. Porimol was a strong young paralysed teenager carried in by relatives who thought he, 'put it on'. Thanks to Dr Bawden, diagnosis of T.B. of the spine was confirmed and the long treatment regime began. Eventually success was achieved when Porimol could move firstly, his toes, then gradually regain walking ability, pushing a wooden chair over the ward's concrete floors. (Ten years later, he was to walk seven miles from his village, three times, to find and greet Max and myself on our return to Joyramkura on a work party.)

Then there was Mera, an old bedridden man crippled by arthritis. He had been abandoned by his family as they fled the area, but a Bengali neighbour alerted us to his plight and our nurses cared for him till his family returned. One of the most distressing cases was a young girl, diagnosed with diabetes, needing daily insulin to survive but the family was poor and no government subsidies available. Being a girl, in her culture, she knew what her fate would be on leaving the hospital. Her pleas for permanency were distressing.

A local community uprising was a prelude to what became known as the Garo Exodus. Despite vigorous efforts to support and persuade the community to stand firm, the inevitable happened. Initially, hospital and our homes became like refugee camps with straw strewn over veranda floors where folk slept till leaving for the border seeking refuge in makeshift camps. There they experienced over-crowding, food shortages, diseases. Many eventually returned seeking to reclaim their land and medical help.

We dispensed emergency food and treated those with illnesses, including malnutrition. It was a lesson in understanding what being a refugee meant. One child, Edie, displayed frantic behaviour whenever anything was being handed out, even medicines. He had to receive his first and all food would be stuffed immediately in his mouth, so no-one could steal it. Try fitting a whole banana in your mouth at once. He did!

The times saw one emergency after another. One night in 1965 we learnt from Radio Australia that India and Pakistan were at war. Because the hospital was close to the northern border, we were served with eviction notices to present to Dhaka within forty-eight hours. The Bawden family was away, so Lola and I had to pack-up, secure essentials, evacuate the student nurses, some patients, arrange money for the male staff who would keep outpatients open and, finally, say good byes. Help came from Laurie Skinner driving us to our evacuation point in Dhaka after salvaging key Mymensingh records. Evacuation to Singapore had been arranged via RAF. Four of us opted to stay in Dhaka for months. Here I experienced being a teacher's aid. Eventually gaining approval to return to Mymensingh, our nursing students could join us to continue theory classes. Life never quite returned to 'normal' even after resuming work at Joyramkura hospital.

Furlough after second term was approved to complete a teaching diploma in order on return to review our first nursing programme. My diploma studies went to plan but towards the end, my eighty year old father lost his sight. Leave of absence was granted but after two years, not renewed. My resignation was reluctantly submitted and accepted. The following day dad died suddenly. There followed a period of questioning about the timing, debating, "was I not suitable enough?" My commitment to Garo ministry was for life, not just a decade. Soon I began to explore other mission openings but the promptings were clear, "Don't try to organise my plans for you." A sense developed that I could rest in the knowledge there was something in the future for which I would be prepared. I needed to see my ministry from God's perspective.

Years of academic work took me back to Bangladesh twice as a United Nations Short Term Consultant and to Indonesia with WHO, over a five year consulting period. My university position enabled me to consult also with four universities in Thailand. I was to learn that ministry was not just geographically determined, but meant being available, responsive and obedient in everyday situations.

Maintaining my Mission connection was important, so I accepted the opportunity to join the State Council and so, representation on the ABMS/GIA Board, becoming the first woman Vice-Chair – for a five year period. This position allowed me the privilege of chairing the Applicants' Committee and later, following as state representative on the new National Human Resources Committee. Among state responsibilities, I enjoyed speaking about the work, when regular deputationists were unavailable. Doing this, I felt the need to re-orientate the focus of presentations, settling on the theme, The Gift and the Giver, drawing from any field illustration both outcomes and what was therefore revealed about, God the Giver. A framework of five parts emerged to highlight the 'Giver', namely, sovereignty, initiative, purpose, timing and God's surprises. The focal field stories would illustrate some, or all of these attributes. Work with applicants and candidates has also motivated exploring in depth and writing about the reality of 'being a disciple'. Preparation for discussion of both topics is under weigh, so the journey in mission continues.



Since mailing the last issue of Binilla it was good to hear from **Sue Tidy** (PNG) and **Judy Mittelstadt** (PNG).

Sue came back to Australia in 1987. Following home assignment she started working, in a Christian school, as a teacher's aide supporting students with special needs. Now after 23 years she has retired. In recent years she has been able to make some of the resources she has created over the years (especially maths), available to other Christian schools in NSW and also English speaking schools in Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, Vanuatu and, soon, India. If you know of any schools that may benefit from these resources please contact Sue. Her email address is, sudy5@bigpond.com

Judy Mittelstadt (PNG) returned to Australia in 1987, following which she worked with SIM for two years. Thereafter she worked in the office at a Christian school and, later still, with children with special needs. Judy injured her back just over two years ago and, in spite of three surgical procedures she is still in pain and unable to work. She would value your prayers for her well-being.

Several former staff members have died recently:

Eileen Tucker and **Shelia Draper** were among our early pioneering staff in the new work commenced in Papua New Guinea in 1949.

Eileen, a brilliant nurse, joined the ABMS staff in 1951. Her medical work, in primitive conditions, was outstanding; and her training and oversight of the "doctor boys" provided previously unknown medical services to village people in the western highlands. Jill Clingan, whose second year coincided with the end of Eileen's twenty-third year, wrote, 'the Baptist Health facilities that she oversaw had the best infant and child immunisation coverage in all of PNG with, therefore, the lowest morbidity and mortality rate for those diseases preventable through immunisation'. As J D Williams delighted to say, PNG was won at the end of a hypodermic needle.

Failing strength, but a cheerful spirit, sustained Eileen over the years, and we remember her with affection. She died in mid 2009. Arthur Kelshaw (PNG) spoke at her memorial service at the Mortdale Baptist church in Sydney. We are grateful to Jill Clingan for reminding us that Binilla had not mentioned her death or remembered her significant contribution to our work.

Shelia Draper (PNG & Indonesia) pioneered linguistic work in the new field of PNG, arriving in 1949. She and her husband, Norman, established the work in Lumusa and, in 1956, were part of the pioneering team to start the amazing work in Dutch New Guinea (now Papua in Indonesia). Her contributions were exceptional in the language and literature fields both with ABMS and SIL.

Sheila and Norman collected the stories of a number of the early converts from the work in PNG and Papua and published them in two books, *Daring to Believe* and *Contact*. In later years Sheila maintained her involvement with PNG through a non-profit organisation "Partners with PNG" that she established with her daughter, Bronwyn, and Pana Wiya. They are currently looking at a pastoral training project for which donations are welcome.

Shelia suffered a massive stroke, but died peacefully on Sunday morning 3 October in Bateman's Bay, NSW.

Millie Wilson and her husband, Bill, on two occasions, filled in for administrative staff on home assignment. They were in Irian Jaya (Papua) in 1980 and Bangladesh in 1987. They proved to be wonderful friends of the Mission both at home and overseas. Millie is remembered for her warm hospitality and encouragement and providing a loving 'grandmother' to the children of our team members. Millie passed away on 30 August 2010.

Another of our losses is **Avis Morcom** (Zimbabwe). Avis and her late husband, Geoff, had been working in South Africa and Zimbabwe prior to joining ABMS in 1988. These experienced workers added great value to the team in Zimbabwe. They returned to Queensland in 1991 and Geoff took on the role of state Director for the Mission. Avis was a wonderful support to Geoff. She died on 2 September 2010.

David Aldridge (PNG) passed away peacefully at his home in Burnie, Tasmania, on 8th October. Together with his late wife, Ruth, David was the first Tasmanian to serve with the ABMS in PNG, 1952 to 1958. He served at Telefomin and, later in the Central Highlands, stationed at Lumusa and Baiyer River. His ministry included training local church leadership, administering village schools and assisting in translation work. Returning to Tasmania David exercised significant ministries in Baptist churches in the north of the State. Ruth died c.1970 following a long illness. David lived at Burnie and later married Margaret Packham. He was a prolific writer and wrote several biographical works. Our sympathy is extended to Margaret and his wide family circle.

Lois Newnham (Bangladesh) died at Frankston, Victoria, on the 23 October 2010, a few months after the death of her husband, Arthur. They served with ABMS Bangladesh, particularly among the Garo people and brought up a family of boys, with the complication of schooling them in India. They came back to Australia in 1971. However, in 1979 they returned to Bangladesh to a very fruitful work among the Paharia tribal people. Lois had the distinction of being a real grandmother on the field – as well as a surrogate one to the mission family – when her son, Bruce, and his wife, Karen, and their three children joined the team. We will miss Lois' prayerful concern for all of us.

Rod Pell (Zambia) died on Friday 5 November at the Peter MacCullum Cancer Centre, East Melbourne, after a long battle with multiple myeloma. A Service of Thanksgiving to celebrate Rod's life was held at the Kew Baptist Church on Saturday 13 November. Rev Dr Ken Manley preached movingly on Rod's choice of subject: *The Power of the Message and the Frailty of the Messenger*.

Rod, and his wife, Liz, were initially assigned by Global Interaction to a church planting role in the high density townships surrounding the city of Harare in Zimbabwe. However, a work permit was not forthcoming and Rod took up a temporary joint position in Melbourne with the Blackburn North Baptist Church (now NewHope) and the church it had recently planted at Eltham. Within a few months the Mission negotiated a teaching position for Rod at the Theological College of Central Africa in Ndola, Zambia, and the Pell family left for Africa in July, 1987. Over the following eight years Rod had a distinguished ministry at the College as a lecturer and Principal. Under his strong and innovative leadership the way was prepared for an African pastor and teacher, Rev Jo Kapolyo, to succeed him. We embrace the Pell family with our love and prayers and, in particular, Liz and the children, Kerryn, Tanya and Natalie.

Jim Kime has been the interim Director for Global Interaction in NSW /ACT since the recent resignation of Rob Ellis. Thank you, Jim and Marilyn, for your ongoing commitment. Your contribution has been many faceted – field service in Central Australia and PNG, committee contributions at state and national levels, teaching and training through Morling College and Calam.

A writers' workshop for the contributors to the Mission history is being planned for early in 2011 in Melbourne. Remember **Gerry Ball** and the other writers as they work on our exciting story.

Personalia

Congratulations to **Arthur Kelshaw** (PNG) who recently celebrated his 90th birthday!

Danelle McLeay (PNG, NSW Director of Missions & Cambodia) has recently been appointed as an Associate Minister at the Flinders Street Baptist Church in Adelaide. She joins the team at a time when the church is planning its 150th anniversary celebrations in August. Danelle will be responsible for outreach to families and youth, and exploring possible ways of impacting the city, starting with the contacts the church has with overseas students.

At the recent Human Resources Committee meeting in Melbourne, three couples who previously served with the Mission were interviewed for a return to ministry. **Debbie and Arthur Broughton** (Zambia) were accepted for a return to Africa – this time Malawi. **Steve and Glenda Venz** (Zambia and Malawi) are also returning to Africa, where Steve will be the team leader for Malawi. **Pat and Graham Barnden** are returning to Bangladesh. They will be eminently suitable for training roles with Symbiosis. As well there was an application from **Michael and Julie Smith** who have been with the Gi6pro programme in Thailand. They will take up long term service after their home assignment. This is an exciting development; a culmination of hopes for the Gi6pro programme.

John and Elaine Olley (Hong Kong & Kazakhstan) and Ros Gooden (Bangladesh) were part of the GDT programme in Townsville this year. Although numbers were small, it was a stimulating group. One of the students from last year's group is currently in Thailand as a volunteer, and another has returned to Vietnam. Another exciting development has been the offshore training that has been provided in Bangladesh both in fisheries and hairdressing.

Geoff Waugh (PNG) has recently published *Light on the Mountains: Pioneer Mission in Papua New Guinea* (2009). The book describes those exciting days when Australian Baptists began a new missionary enterprise in PNG. It traces the beginnings of the Mission, the formation of a virile church and the spread of revival among people still emerging from "the Stone Age". The book is available at Koorong bookstores – or direct from Geoff for \$15 including postage. Geoff can be contacted at geoffwaugh1@gmail.com or 57 McCaskill Road, Pullenvale, Qld 4069.

The photograph below was taken at **Ian Emmett's** (Bangladesh & PNG) 90th birthday celebration!



Ian writes: "Behind Ruth and me, and reading left to right, is Ted and Jenny Woods (Ted is OT lect. at BCV); Judy and Phil Driver; Cathy Woods holding her niece Bethany (Cathy is a nurse at Elcho Island off Darwin); James Casey and, peeping out, is Bethany's ma, Emma Morgan alongside (Rev) Jenny Ann (Driver) Casey; next is Emma's husband Toli holding their second child Mila (Tol is son of Wycliff Translators in PNG. He is pastor of the Eastern Hills Church); finally Megan Woods and her Lenji friend Kagwa. An interesting collection you'll agree".

Tony Cupit (PNG), at the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) Congress in July, concluded a significant role with the Alliance and its world-wide Living Water training programs. We rejoice in the ministry opportunities Tony has had internationally, and we now look forward to his contribution to the writing of the Global Interaction history. Tony will complete the story of the work on PNG commenced by Seton Arndell.

Symbiosis was involved in the recent Great Aussie Rickshaw Ride down the eastern coast of Australia. You may have seen something of this on TV. It was a great time of education and fun, involving four of the Symbiosis workers from Bangladesh and dozens of volunteer riders and support workers. The Australian High Commission held a reception in Dhaka to celebrate the successful completion of the Ride. Guests had been invited from the Government, the diplomatic and Australian communities and the Symbiosis family. The High Commissioner, Dr Justin Lee, introduced the work of Symbiosis so well that there was almost nothing left for Morris Lee, to add! However, Morris did interview the Bangladeshis who had visited Australia as part of the Ride, and five village women who are beneficiaries of our projects in Bangladesh. He noted that, while the four Symbiosis staff members had made their first visit to Australia, for the five village women this was their first visit to Dhaka! There were some funny moments as Khaleque and Hozrot described their surprise at how few people there are in Australia and also their shock when they saw that Australian farmers don't bring their cattle and sheep indoors at night. There was a very positive reaction to the night's program. Ambassadors from other countries were impressed with our work and the concept of the Rickshaw Ride. It was covered by the national TV news in Bangladesh and some local newspapers. Who knows what will eventuate from the exposure? In any case, we are grateful for the interest and support of the Australian High Commissioner. This can only be helpful as we work to increase our level of support from the Australian Government and expand our outreach to the poor.

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We welcome news items for the Personalia column and general inquiries. Please contact Chris Pittendrigh, 15 Woodlea Street, Doncaster East Vic 3109 (telephone 03 9848 1096) or chris.pittendrigh@newhope.net.au. Rosalind Gooden, 3/1 Ferguson Avenue, Myrtle Bank SA 5064 (telephone 08 8379 0459) or rgooden@werple.net.au.

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