

Koinonia

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OVERSEAS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
CONVENTION

of
veterans

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KOINONIA

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winter

if you are scripturally born again you are a member of the Body of Christ and a son of my very own Father. As a member of the same family, you are my own brother, whether you realize it or acknowledge it or not. As far as I am concerned, this is true whether you are a Charismatic or anti-Charismatic; whether you believe that everyone should speak in tongues or whether you believe that speaking in tongues is of the devil; whether you believe that the gifts of the Spirit are in operation in the Church today or whether you believe they ceased at the close of the Apostolic age; whether you are a Calvinist and believe in the "Five Points" or whether you are an Arminian and believe that the "Five Points" are heresy; whether you believe in eternal security or in falling from grace; whether you accept only the "King James" or prefer a modern version; whether you believe in baptismal regeneration or no ordinances at all; whether you believe in immersion or sprinkling, infant or adult baptism; whether you wash feet or don't; whether you are a Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, Church of Christ, Mennonite, Amish, Seventh Day Adventist, Episcopalian, Catholic . . . or no denomination at all; whether you believe in female or only male ordination; whether you think that Saturday is the true Sabbath and should be kept holy or whether you think that the day is indifferent; whether you eat meat or are a vegetarian; whether you drink coffee, tea and soft drinks or only water, fruit juices and milk; whether you wear a toupee or sport a bald head; whether you colour your hair or not; whether you are a pre-, a post-, or an amillennialist; whether you are a Republican, a Democrat or a Socialist; whether your skin is white, black, red, brown or yellow; and if there be any other doubtful matters or silly nonessentials over which we differ . . . if you are born again, we still are members of the same family and organic parts of the same spiritual Body. I may think some of your beliefs are as crazy as a loon, but if I have sufficient love for God, agape love, I will not reject you as a person.

Paul E. Billheimer in "Love Covers" (p. 114)

I agree!

the coming of the Holy Spirit into the lives of the early Christians produced in their midst a spirit of oneness and unity that excelled anything previously experienced by the people of God in the Old Testament times. Such was the high degree of harmony in their relationships, there was no word to describe it adequately. The Greek use the word 'koinonia' to describe this special kind of fellowship - the fellowship enjoyed by those who are committed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we are in fellowship we are equal and no distinctions, all differences are demolished. K



editor

Haryady Chandra



associate editor

Sue Min Ooi



art director

Raymond Tham

Up front

with the editor
HARYADY CHANDRA

As the royal yacht *Britannia* sailed out of Victoria Harbour, amidst the colourful spectacle of fireworks and monsoonal rain, 4000 soldiers from the People's Liberation Army mustered on the colony's border, ready to enforce what Chinese President Jiang Zemin referred to as Hong Kong's "return to the motherland". For the 68th time this century, the Union Jack will slide permanently down a colonial flagpole. This glittering ceremony on the stroke of midnight on June 30, 1997, watched by millions around the world, marked the official handover of Hong Kong back to mainland China.

The world has been anticipating this unique handover with much bewilderment, while the people of Hong Kong are both proud and anxious—proud of the reunification of China, and anxious about the awkward title of *Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)*, which signals the difficulty of implementing Deng Xiaoping's promise of "one country, two systems" with a "high degree of autonomy". No matter what the politicians and experts say, everyone is only guessing about how this bold experiment will fare. All the opinions boil down to basic attitudes: optimistic or pessimistic view. Optimists are confident that Hong Kong can remain a fair and open place to live and work, while pessimists view Hong Kong as falling victim to China's power-mad communists.

This uncertainty concerning the future of Hong Kong not only affects the political and economic condition of the territory, but permeates into the religious aspect as well. Questions like "Will the Christians of Hong Kong be subjected to the harsh treatment and severe persecutions faced by their fellow believers in mainland China?" and "To what extent will the religious freedom persist in Hong Kong following the handover?" will undoubtedly continue to plague the minds of many believers. Christians in Hong Kong viewed their fate in different ways. Some simply escaped from all these uncertainties by migrating to countries like Australia and Canada, while others could only bury their heads in the sand and prayed for the best.

A particularly interesting view of the Hong Kong Handover scenario is analogous to the life of Joseph (**Genesis 37-50**) as mentioned by David Wang, the International Director of Asian Outreach. Over 140 years ago, as a consequence of evil and greed, Hong Kong was sold to a foreign power. Like Joseph, Hong Kong then went through numerous ups and downs. Like Joseph, Hong Kong prospered, while its homeland went through devastations and famine. Then Joseph was reunited with his huge, starving family, and became such a blessing!

Here then is the challenge for all Hong Kong's Christians: like Hong Kong city, they have also prospered, and like Joseph, they can also say, "Come closer. Take a good look. We have acquired plenty and we are now returning to bless." This has a divine purpose, just as Joseph had declared, "For God did it!" (**Genesis 45:5**).

We may never know with certainty what lies ahead in the future of Hong Kong, but God *does*, and He is *on our side!* What we do know for certain is that He works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose (**Romans 8:28**). K



Once Upon A Time in China
Herbert Chua reporting

Herbert Chua



cuba diving is complicated. Many details must be remembered to enjoy the sport safely, but one surpasses all the rest in importance. All divers has it etched into their memory from the start: to breathe out when they ascend from the ocean floor, otherwise they could die. As the water pressure decreases, the pressure of oxygen in their lungs expands and needs to be released by breathing. A diver holding their breath, even for 3 metres, could rupture their lungs as they ascend. Before anything else, divers learn this rule best, because it is a matter of life and death.

Christianity has a similar rule in relation to Christian leadership. To ignore this rule, or get it confused can be spiritually devastating. This truth is important for both the individual leader and the health of the Christian community he/she is involved with. The principle is simple and perhaps "matters of fact". If only the instructors of potential Christian leaders could etch this truth in the minds, heart, and soul of their pupils - I'm sure there would be fewer fatalities. What is this truth that is so important? It is this: in Christianity there is only One True Leader - that is God, our Lord Jesus Christ.

While the New Testament is full of authority figures like apostles, prophets, and elders, the notions of leadership as the world practices it is starkly absent. In the New Testament, leadership was the delegated leadership of Christ. An apostle was an apostle

Any leader or potential leader in the church, should view their leadership as totally subservient to Christ's leadership.

because Christ commissioned them to teach others what He had taught them (**Matthew 28:16-20**). A prophet spoke what the Holy Spirit revealed to them (**2 Peter 1:21**). An elder was someone called by the Holy Spirit (**Acts 20:28**) and recognised by the other elders (**1 Timothy 4:14**). None of these offices was earned through skill and ability but given by God. These people were not leaders so much as people who led people to Christ.

Jesus clearly established himself as "The Leader." In **Matthew 23:8-12**, Jesus forbade the disciples from following the pharisees' practice of honouring one person above others. Rather, Jesus taught all the disciples were equal, they were to call each other "brothers." He also taught that only "one" was greater - Jesus, the one true Teacher and

Master (v. 8). The apostles and writers of the New Testament understood this clearly and regarded themselves "slaves" or "servants of Christ" (**Romans 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Revelation 1:1**), playing down any notions of their superiority. They were actually preoccupied with elevating the name of Christ (**Romans 16:27; 2 Peter 3:18; etc.**). In recording the events of the Acts church, Luke attributed the work to Jesus - not the apostles (**Acts 1:1; 2:47; 5:14; 11:24; etc.**). In churches today, the true leadership of Christ is obscure as exemplified when leaders receive praise for the success of a

ministry - not Jesus. We are not aware that the good things happening in our churches are the activity of Jesus. We are confused as to who the leader of the church is.

Whenever Christians or Churches forget that Jesus is the absolute leader, problems and heresies are sure to follow. Of all New Testament communities, the Corinthians were known for their great problems. The first and most serious problem Paul addresses in his first letter is the issue of Christ's absolute leadership over the church. The Corinthians were confused over the roles of people like Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, effectively making them substitute leaders (**1 Corinthians 1:12**). Paul corrects them by pointing out that the church is led by God through Christ (**1 Corinthians 3:5-9; 3:22-4:1**); Paul, Apollos, and Cephas were only "servants" assigned a "task" by God (**1 Corinthians 3:5**). Similarly, in **Colossians 2:19**, Paul teaches that people become heretics when they have "lost connection with the Head (Christ)." In other words, people who lose sight of Jesus' sole leadership in the church are no longer part of the church. Any leader or potential leader in the church, should view their leadership as totally subservient to Christ's leadership. They are merely slaves or servants handling given tasks assigned by Christ.

What kind of person is a good leader?

Paul answered this question when he wrote to Timothy in **1 Timothy 3:1-7**. What is surprising about Paul's criteria is his lack of interest in the person's leadership gifts with the exception of their ability to teach (v. 2) and keep their children under control (v. 4). More attention is directed to the kind of person rather than what a person can achieve. The qualities Paul is interested in, are those that reflect Christ. In other words, when someone looks at a Christian leader, they see Christ in their life. Paul often points people to emulate his life, but only in that he emulated Christ (**1 Corinthians 4:16; Galatians 4:112; Philippians 3:17; 2 Timothy 3:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:7**). The best teacher and leader is one who can speak about the things of Christ by words and example. Paul displays this trait admirably when he described his Christian life as turning his back on everything (**Philippians 3:7**) to know Christ more fully (**Philippians 3:8-11**). Paul's attitude to life is the example he sets for all Christians (**Philippians 4:17**). Potential leaders communicate Christ in what they say and do. People with this quality naturally lead people to Christ - to His person, to praise Him - rather than themselves.

Lead
... and straight t

Leaders need to be selected carefully over time. Paul's instructed Timothy not to be "hasty in the laying on of hands" (**Timothy 5:22**), to select leaders carefully. It is overtime, Paul claims that one's qualities become apparent (**1 Timothy 5:24-25**). We should observe those we believe have leadership potential. If we are patient, we will see their true quality and nature and be better able to judge their appropriateness in leading God's people. There is nothing more compromising than having inappropriate leadership jeopardising the name of Christ.

Training leaders

One of the great things is that Jesus is involved in leadership training. Perhaps not in way of earthly supervisor's instruction, but nevertheless Jesus' calling, teaching and instruction is still real. In **Ephesians 4:7-11** Paul states that Christ has gifted the church with leaders. Leaders are not leading by accident, but as a direct expression of Jesus' generosity, greatness, and grace. A leader should be encouraged that Christ has chosen them and placed them where He wants. There is great design behind that. When Jesus chooses a leader, He does not abandon them to their task without help. **Ephesians 4:16** states "From Him (Christ) the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." Jesus supplies all that a leader needs to do the job for the body of Christ to grow and mature. Jesus also guides and teaches all Christians, through the Holy Spirit.

In John's Gospel, the Holy Spirit is sent to give the church the same kind of guidance and leadership that the disciples enjoyed during Jesus' earthly ministry (**John 14:16-17; 14:26; 2:20**). Christ's intimate involvement in teaching and directing leaders, does not mean we abandon our leaders in the area of training, but it does mean leaders can be assured that at the highest level, support is present and active. The development of leaders does not fall entirely into mortal hands, although people can contribute to the leaders' preparation. Paul gives Timothy pointers in relating to his preparation as a Christian leader.

Firstly, Paul is concerned that Timothy watches his doctrine as evidenced by the number of times Paul refers to it in his letter (**1 Timothy 1:4; 4:1-5; 4:13, 15-16; 6:14**). By doctrine, Paul means the true teaching of the church. Similarly, young leaders need to watch their doctrine by ignoring false and speculative teaching (vv. 1:4; 4:1-5), reading scripture (v. 4:13), and making sure they live what they teach (v. 4:15-16). They should be immerse in the Word of God, ignoring human speculations and controversy. This involves reading the Bible, and other books and resources that will help them understand the Word of God. Leaders need a grasp of scripture that is reflected in their teaching as well as lifestyle, not merely an academic understanding.

Secondly, Paul directs Timothy's attention to the urgency and priority of prayer (**1 Timothy 2:1-8**). Prayer is very important, especially for government authorities so that Christians can exist in peace and preach the Gospel. Likewise, young leaders should immerse themselves in prayer for the same reasons. The priority of prayer is evident in **Acts 6:4** where it is seen as one of two apostolic responsibilities. If prayer was so important to the apostles and occupied so much of Jesus' time, all Christian leaders should make prayer a high priority.

Finally, Paul encourages Timothy not to neglect the spiritual gifting he received at his commissioning (**1 Timothy 4:13**). The nature of his gifting, is not clear to us, but it was obviously clear to Timothy and Paul. The principle is that the gifts we are aware of which God has given for the ministry are important tools that must be exercised for the church's benefit. Practice your gifts while in leadership.

Summary

Do we call anyone a leader in Christianity? The title is used liberally today in Christian circles, but in the New Testament the apostles who were the highest authorities displayed total disinterest in their own ideas, methods, or ideology regarding Christianity. They were more interested in leading other people to Christ. Rather than presenting their own ideas about Christian teaching, they were preoccupied with Jesus' teaching, Jesus' instructions, Jesus' way of living. If the apostles' ideas were authoritative, it was the authoritative understanding of Christian truth since they were commissioned by Christ and taught first hand.

The best Christian leader is the leader who points to Christ. They know Jesus as the true leader and they see themselves as Christ's servants. This kind of person has Christ's glory at heart and conveys Jesus' authoritative teaching as recorded in the Bible. Disinterested in their own or other people's opinions, they are devoted to Christ's opinion.

About the Author:

Frank Ahlin (far right) is the senior staff worker of the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) at the Flinders University of S.A. and the University of South Australia.



relationship.
the point.

Prospective

Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant!

When Jesus spoke about His return, He told several parables. The parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) was one of them. In this parable, two servants were commended by their master with the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant". These two were faithful in multiplying the money they were given.

Essentially the parable teaches us how to be faithful stewards of the gifts and abilities entrusted to us as we await Jesus' return; gifts and resources which are to be used with love to the glory of God and the furtherance of His Kingdom. How are we to carry out this responsibility?

After the servants had shown that they could handle with a few things, their master also gave them charge over more things. Therefore we need to be faithful with the seemingly simple or small tasks entrusted to us. If we can fulfill these tasks faithfully, we will be trusted to carry out more challenging tasks.

In the months ahead, the committee of all OCF centres will experience an influx of new members. By being a committee member, one will be a leader and will need to exhibit leadership qualities, but being part of the local committee is not just about leadership, it is about using one's God given talent to His glory. **Everyone is** blessed with different gifts. The effectiveness of the local committee will be enhanced when the different gifts are being utilised. **No one** should feel they have nothing to contribute.

For some, service may not necessarily be through the local committee. Service may come in other ways. It may simply be driving the extra distance to send a brother or sister home after OCF meetings, washing up after supper, or opening one's home for get-togethers. Whatever we are called to do, it is important to complete the task whole-heartedly and cheerfully. In this way we will remain faithful in our service and when our Lord returns, we will hear His commendation "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

For those who will be part of the new committees, take the opportunity to develop your gifts and talents. One important aspect of the OCF ministry is to build up and equip OCFers. Involvement in a local committee forms part of this process. Be faithful in carrying out the responsibility entrusted in the committee because faithfulness will result in other responsibilities in the future. These future responsibilities may be in the local church, in your homeland, or perhaps in foreign missions.

We have been warned by Jesus to be watchful and ready for His second coming. Since we do not know with certainty when He will return, let us be faithful in our service. Do not be caught unprepared for Jesus' return.

Yours in Christ, *Tuck Yean Yong*



OCF Australia Directory 1997

OCF Curtin
Mr Lawrence Chiam
echiam@alpha2.curtin.edu.au

OCF Murdoch
Ms Wendy Lim
chenchen@cleo.murdoch.edu.au

OCF Perth
Mr Li-on Lam
onon@tartarus.uwa.edu.au

OCF Griffith University
Ms Yoshino Kubo
s934554@student.gu.edu.au

OCF Univ. of Queensland
Mr James Hemetsberger
s117784@student.uq.edu.au

OCF Queensland Univ. of Technology
Mr Desmond Chua
ck.chua@student.qut.edu.au

OCF Armidale
Ms Grace Tham
ctham@metz.une.edu.au

OCF Sydney
Mr Roopesh Dhar
rdhar@mail.usyd.edu.au

OCF Wollongong
Ms Seini Vea
ocf_wollongong@post1.com

OCF Newcastle
Mr Timothy Lee (Vice-President)
c9427086@alinga.newcastle.edu.au

OCF Adelaide
Mr Teguh Santoso
askani@senet.com.au

OCF Flinders
Mr Jee Yuen Kong
kong0010@flinders.edu.au

OCF Univ. of South Australia
Colin Tan
9502443t@cw.x.citywest.unisa.edu.au

OCF Geelong
Ms Susana Carcamo
carcamo@deakin.edu.au

OCF Hobart
Ms Eleanor Yeo
esyee@postoffice.utas.edu.au

OCF Canberra (ACT)
Mr Joni
ocfact@dynamite.com.au

EXCO President
Mr Tuck Yean Yong
(08) 8373 3273
tyyong@student.adelaide.edu.au

EXCO Treasurer
Mr Barry Wee
(0411) 225 278
bwee@tpgi.com.au

OCF Carlton
Mr Swee Teng Tan
s_sweett@eduserv.its.unimelb.edu.au

OCF Kew
Mr Steven Kuan
071686@bud.cc.swin.edu.au

EXCO Secretary
Mr Herbert Chua
(08) 8266 6829
hghchua@student.adelaide.edu.au

EXCO Resource Person
Rev. Merrilyn Teague
Fax/ (08) 8332 2151
Koinonia@iname.com

OCF Caulfield
Mr Paul Cheng
coolpaul@yoyo.cc.monash.edu.au

OCF La Trobe
Ms Sandra Wong
ecows@lux.latrobe.edu.au

EXCO Prayer & Mission Coordinator
Ms Sene Li Wong
(08) 8431 1695
wongsde@adam.com.au

OCF Clayton
Mr Kang Yee Chai
kang@otter.com.au

OCF Melbourne University
Mr Koh Cheng Thoon
kohcheng@ariel.its.unimelb.edu.au

OCF Frankston
Mr Bernard Tay

OCF Parkville
Ms Jamie Phar
s_chiapp@eduserv.its.unimelb.edu.au

It he plot thickens, the alphabets become a frenzied blur, sweeping pages create a gentle breeze. Beads of sweat lace the brow as the chapter draws to a close; for some, the best ever written; for others, awakening from an unpleasant dream. Both alight from the plane onto home soil with just Australian memories. Three ex-OCFers were asked to share their experiences in and after leaving Australia; this is what followed suit ...

TAN Loke Mun spent half of 10 years in Deakin University studying architecture. Actively involved in OCF Geelong, he became president in his final year. He completed his PhD in Melbourne University, served in OCF Parkville and OCF Melbourne Uni and chaired EXCO Australia, 1989. Loke Mun met May-Ann, a business student in Deakin in 1987 and they were married in June 1995. Observe how "Our God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all we can ever ask or think" when we follow Him faithfully.

Time flies. Almost six years and two generations of OCFers have come and gone since I was there but Praise God that the good works of OCF continues. Indeed, if the Lord builds the house, it will be a glorious house.

May-Ann and I meet up regularly with ex-OCFers, most of whom still serve God as before. The type and pace of ministries have changed but hearts and characters built up from OCF days have only become stronger and wiser. I strongly believe that an OCFer cannot be taught how to return home and do greater works. Instead, time has proven that "those that are doing will continue to do", as exemplified by those who served God with us during those glorious years in Australia.

I remember a great concern on the "fallout" rate of returnees and having observed firsthand, I'm convinced there is no need for alarm. God is in total control. Returnees, especially those who became Christians or spent long years in Australia, are faced with a new chapter in their lives, with a whole new scope of Christian ministry potential and careers. "Does missing church services three weeks in a row or serving fewer hours compared to student days constitute falling away?" I suggest not. God's creation adjusts to changes of natural seasons. Likewise, everyone adjusts to life seasons, but not at the same rate. The adjustments they face vary greatly one from another. We have to be patient just as God is patient.

There are three major aspects of adjustment:

- A new career and work environment vs. *studies*
- A new ministry setting, church etc. vs. *moving away from student ministry*
- New responsibilities towards family vs. *leaving home as a juvenile and returning as a responsible adult*

The smaller the degree of required adjustments, the faster returnees adjust. However, changes will continue to occur. The key is to be always faithful through it all.

May-Ann and myself both returned to established churches in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. I had the privilege to help pioneer the Household of Faith church in 1993. After our marriage (additional adjustment!), May-Ann joined me in HOF. Praise God for the church is growing from glory to glory!

Three college Christian groups (similar to OCF) use our premises for their mid-week meetings. Having been similarly blessed by such churches in OCF, I ensure they have full and free access to all our facilities with no strings attached. In God's kingdom no one ever got more by hoarding. Each time we open our hands wide to give, God gives back to us, pressed down, shaken together and flowing out all over.

feature

ON THE MOVIE

OCF veterans

edited by Sue Min Ooi

May-Ann helps out with the children's church and is the church treasurer. I teach, lead worship, host and co-lead home cell groups and serve as church deacon. I also preach at various churches, camps and para-church groups (Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship). Interestingly, most of these skills were picked up and honed in our OCF years. Victorian OCF centres operated along a biblical church pattern (there is actually no para-church pattern in the Bible) and much of what we practised then applies to our present situation. Our plea to OCFers is to take full advantage of opportunities to serve God in OCF, dream big dreams and go as far as God allows you to.

God has been good to our careers since we returned. May-Ann is now a stock broker and I was offered partnership in a new architecture firm. We both adapted quickly and in many ways, such were our characters even in Australia. We always believed God for great things and had a vision for greater ways to glorify Him. God is no man's debtor, He honours those that honour Him. We aim to ensure every aspect of our lives is totally dedicated to Him. The three 'T's learnt in OCF: Time, Talents and Treasures, are for His Glory.

I cannot but marvel and praise God for taking hold of us, wiping out our preconceptions and showed us a greater way. In retrospect, student life was fairly simple (except for assignments, projects and exams!), especially in the way we could go all out for Him. I'm glad we did, for as life gets more complicated, we know He will never fail us. Our faith in Him has grown, through good and not-so-good times. When I arrived in Australia in 1993, God promised me, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you". God kept His promise. Our lives are a living testimony to His greatness and faithfulness. Glory to His Name!

Associate Professor Lawrence Chia is the Director of Alumni Affairs & Development Office and Master of Sheares Hall of Residence in the National University of Singapore. God brought him to an evangelical faith in Moore College and Evangelical Union (EU) at Sydney University in the late 1950s just prior to his involvement in OCF. He chaired the Interim Committee that inaugurated OCF Australia at an informal conference of various OCF centres at Cowes Phillip Island, Dec 1959. In his short reminiscence, we learn about OCF almost at its very foundation.

It has been almost 40 years since my OCF days. OCF was a challenging channel for me to continue in Christian growth and ministry, to reach out and encourage fellow overseas students, especially in preparation for service back home. I was thrilled and thankful at having attended the first and second official OCF Conventions organized by Adelaide (St. Peter's College, 1959) and Melbourne (Melbourne Bible Institute, 1960) OCFers. We were blessed with outstanding speakers who loved God and His people, filled with exemplary mastery and exposition of His Word. Excellence pervaded at all levels, including worship and music, with the first OCF Convention anthem composed by Lillian Chew (nee Ho) in Melbourne. There also emerged an informal OCF quartet of Chua Lin Sien (Sydney), Edwin Choo, Leong Kok Thye and Yang Soo Suan (Melbourne). Perhaps the 40th OCF Convention may see the "come-back" performance of these famous four stewards of music talent and total Christian commitment.

I was also both surprised and joyful when asked to chair the inauguration of OCF Australia at Cowes Phillip Island (1959). It was indeed inspiring and uplifting to see fellow Asian students encouraged and supported by committed and caring Australians, exercising their leadership and gifts for OCF groups throughout various Australian cities. These early



Left: A historical photo of the first (unofficial) OCF Convention at Cowes Phillip Island in 1957. These are the leaders of the interim committee (Prof. Chia, third from left) and Rev. Leighton Ford (middle), who is Billy Graham's brother-in-law.

Inset: Forever young. Prof. Chia at the 33rd OCF Australia Convention 1992 in Brisbane, Queensland.

Right: First OCF Australia Convention in Adelaide, South Australia, in 1958.

conferences were characterized by warm, deep and joyous fellowship and a sense of purpose and urgency which I believe have been the hallmark of OCF.

It was through EU and OCF that I responded to the challenge of full-time service in Scripture Union (SU) after my return to Singapore. Leaving behind an academic career to serve amidst considerable opposition was a difficult decision to make, and I found great encouragement and prayer support from OCFers in Australia. In fact, both Singapore and other parts of Asia saw many ex-OCFers serving SU in full-time or voluntary capacities. The fellowship of such returnees, together with those in the Graduates' Fellowship and the wider family of the Fellowship of Evangelical Students (FES) were most supportive at a time when most churches in Singapore and indeed Asia were essentially liberal or nominal, often reticent, even hostile to evangelical faith.

After 2¼ years, the Lord brought back well-prepared and dynamic fellow OCFer, (now Rev Dr Canon) James Wong to take over full-time SU ministry. God wonderfully opened the way back to Chemistry research and teaching and serving in Sheares Hall where my student experience in Australia has been highly motivating and useful. I also participated various pioneering projects with the evangelical awakening where western missionaries entered real partnership with Asian Christians and Discipleship Training Centres. Many of us who had small roles in Australian Billy Graham crusades 20 years earlier were actively involved in Singaporean crusades. God has truly been faithful, His Word real and relevant, the countless lessons learnt from EU/OCF days still applicable to my later Christian ministry. The evangelical and inter-denominational character of EU/OCF with their basic philosophies and methodologies were most helpful.

As Christians in Asian situations, faithful in both stewardship and relationships, we are called to be salt of the earth and light of the world. This means excellence not only in our professional lives but also our service to the wider community. For some, the Lord has been especially gracious in allowing recognition of our contributions through national awards. As an academic involved in scientific and educational bodies, I travel abroad for sabbaticals and conferences where, through His help, we not only contribute and are enriched academically, but are involved in Christian communities overseas. Sharing and encouraging students in these situations bring back fond and grateful memories of OCF days. It was also my privilege to contribute as a volunteer in the Special Constabulary and the National Police Cadet Corps.

Although professional, family, church and social life demands may not allow one to contribute as actively as one would like, I feel both exercised and privileged in being able to identify with, and speak for an evangelical cause whenever possible. To this end, I am grateful for various honorary roles in the OMF, FES and SU. Perhaps among the many thoughts and verses that have influenced me from OCF days, the continuing challenge for me and hopefully others, including present OCFers, is the words of our Lord Himself: "For unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required." Luke 12:48

I close by asking you to join me in giving thanks to God for His grace to many of us who have seen Him work in OCF and in prayer that we might be found fervent and faithful to the end, till we are greeted by our Lord with those words "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matthew 25:21.

Continued to page 16 . . .



For Christians, beauty is not skin-deep, for one who truly loves the Lord shines for Jesus and reflects His life to all those around. **Reverend Merrilyn Teague**, the Resource Person for OCF Australia, tells us more about it.

Over 15 years of working closely with OCFers, Australia-wide, many couples have approached me for counsel and prayer. These relationships have grown into rich friendships where times of sharing have become both precious and stimulating. Praise the Lord, for these Christian couples have submitted themselves to Godly oversight and through it all, as they move towards the wedding altar, they can say in their hearts joyfully, "Because of You, Lord, our relationship is clean."

However, the world promotes promiscuity by loudly advertising contraceptive use. Condoms are freely sold to anyone! Some State Governments have legalised abortion. Some Swedish doctor boasts of having "performed 10,000 abortions throughout their practising years!" Another unwanted consequence of such actions is suicide.

Therefore it is my Christian and pastoral love and responsibility to you, my beloved brother and sister, to both prepare you and fore-warn you how we Christians should conduct ourselves with this special friend. I intend in no way to draw up a rigid list of "do's" and "don'ts", but endeavour to give you both Scriptural admonition and clear guidelines of conduct. The rejection or acceptance of these pointers, will be evidence of your love for the Lord, your obedience to His Word and your own prayerfulness. **Psalm 119:9-11; John 14:21; Hebrew 12:14**

The Bible says:

- "Goodness and mercy shall follow (pursue) me all the days of my life" **Psalm 23:6**
- "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness and all these things shall be added to you" **Matthew 6:33** cf **Romans 14:17** to elaborate
- "Love not the world or anything in the world" **1 John 2:15**
- "Flee youthful lusts" **2 Timothy 2:22**
- Lust of the flesh (craving for sensual gratification), lust of the eyes (greedy fantasies of the mind), and pride of life (confidence in one's own resources) "come not from the Father, but from the world" **1 John 2:16**
- "Present your bodies (whole self) as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God for this is an act of worship" **Romans 12:2**
- "Escape the corruption of the world caused by evil desires, for this very reason make every effort to add to your faith, moral excellency, goodness" **2 Peter 1:4-5**
- "Avoid the appearance of evil" **1 Thessalonians 5:22**

Practical pointers:

- Be aware that you are a member of a Family. Be careful not to shut-out others while developing this friendship, even younger brothers!
- Group activities are fun and healthy. Fellowship builds up reserves of self-control by releasing energies in a healthy way - a good reason to join the soccer team!
- Avoid being on your own in dark places! OK..."see the lights of City (?)" from a respectable lookouts at respectable times, with people around you, otherwise refuse!
- Control visiting each other's homes, especially late at night! "A thousand eyes are on you." Help each other, share and pray together - "sure..." - cook a meal for him (if you can cook!) But not every night. Leave that place before midnight!
- Emphatically avoid being in each other's bedroom! Never shut the door! It's a "no, no" and can too easily tempt even the strong Christian couple.
- Put temptation out of the way:
 - don't holiday on your own - wherever or whenever (wait for the honeymoon)
 - control your sensual emotions
 - don't become physically involved
 - watch your hands
 - avoid heavy and sustained petting (leave this love-making until marriage)
 - avoid living together with the opposite sex (wait until you get married)
 - keep doors open for all to view all the time
 - keep the bright lights on and enjoy the outdoor sunshine as well
 - our dress - can be attractive, but not revealing
 - our behaviour - respectable and not unruly
 - our conversation - stimulating, not degrading
 - our contact - controlled, not flirtatious
 - our position - safe-guarded, not foolish

Always ask yourself these questions:

- "Can I take Jesus with me?"
- "Would He bless our conversation?"
- "Could He enjoy my thoughts?"
- "Would my actions please Him?"

This anti-dote will help us overcome any fleshly weakness and avoid ungodly behaviour in mind and body:

- Self-control = will-power and the fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:23-24**)
- Denial = mark of discipleship (**Matthew 16:24**)
- Moderation = unselfishness and consideration (**Philippians 4:5**)

As Paul says, we can keep our mind (the battle ground) pure and honourable to the Lord - "whatsoever things are true, honourable, right, pure, lovely, of good repute, excellence, praise, then think on these things" **Philippians 4:8**

As we co-operate by shunning such literature, videos, conversations, or internet (especially), we make room for the Holy Spirit to renew our minds according to the Word of God, cleanse our thoughts and purify our motives, our behaviour Christ-like. **Psalm 51; Hebrew 12:14**

May I heartily recommend Dr. Barry Chant's two explicit books on these matters: *Straight Talk About Sex* and *Straight Talk About Marriage* (The House of Tabor, P.O. Box 564, Plympton, South Australia, 5038). Also, popular youth and convention speaker, friend of OCF, Winkie Pratney: *Youth Aflame* and *Handbook for Followers of Jesus*.

As Christians, hundreds of eyes are on us both at university and in our communities especially from our families and respective homes. For JESUS' sake, uphold your CHRISTIAN and BIBLICAL faith - never consider flattery and living with members of the opposite sex! Be different from the world (**Romans 12:2**). Girls living with other girls have more fun and gain precious sisters for a lifetime. Guys share a house with other fellows. Building an OCF Ministry House can be a worthwhile investment for you as a brother, sowing and caring for one another. Open your home for prayer meetings, Committee meetings, birthday parties or supper after an OCF meeting!

In the future, should you ever cross cultures for Jesus'

sake, these life-principles of "Boy-Girl Relationships" will make you a trusted person of integrity, even foreigners will include you! Keep yourself pure, in mind and body, in thoughts and deed, in public and private, on the front-line and the side-line, as a clear reflection of the HOLINESS and BEAUTY of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. **Proverbs 4:32; Matthew 5:8; John 14:21; Hebrew 12:14; 1 Peter 2:9**

Finally, if you can appreciate this special friend's value from the Lord's eyes and mind.

- They are a precious gift from the Lord
- They are someone to be carefully treasured
- Their body is a temple of the Holy Spirit
- Enrich and enlarge their life
- They are a Jesus-lady or a Jesus-man

The way you treat this special friend reflects your measure of love for the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY. Sure, He forgives our mistakes, but these may haunt us indefinitely! Therefore, my beloved brother and sister, keep falling in love with Jesus, over and over again (**Revelation 2:4**). Keep yourself in the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. X

Adelaide, South Australia

5 September 1989

5 June 1997

Believe it, and be satisfied.

Everyone longs to give themselves completely to someone, to have a deep soul relationship with another, to be loved thoroughly, and exclusively.

But God to a Christian says,

"No, not until you are satisfied, fulfilled and content with being loved by Me alone, with giving yourself totally and unreservedly to Me, with having an intensely personal and unique relationship with Me alone,

discovering that only in Me is your satisfaction to be found, will you be capable of the perfect human relationship that I have planned for you.

You will never be able to unite with another until you are united with Me, exclusive of anyone or anything else, exclusive of any other desires of longings.

I want you to stop planning, stop wishing,

and allow Me to give you the most thrilling plan existing, one that you cannot imagine.

I want you to have the very best.

Please allow Me to bring it to you.

You just keep watching Me, expecting the greatest things, keep experiencing the satisfaction that I AM, keep listening and learning the things that I tell you, you just wait, that's all.

Don't worry.

Don't be anxious.

Don't look around at the things others have gotten or that I've given them.

Don't look at the things you think you want.

You just keep looking to Me, or you'll miss what I want to show you.

And then, when you're ready,

I'll surprise you with a love far more wonderful than any you would dream of.

You see, until you are ready, and until the one I have for is ready,

(I am working even at this moment to have you both ready at the same time)

until you are both satisfied exclusively with Me, and the life I prepared for you, you won't be able to experience the love that exemplifies your relationship with Me, and thus is the perfect love.

And dear one, I want you to have this most wonderful love.

I want you to see in the flesh a picture of your relationship with Me, and to enjoy materially and concretely, the everlasting union of beauty, perfection, and love.

Know I love you utterly,

I am God.

Believe it, and be satisfied."

Author unknown

...to have and to hold,
 from this day forward,
 for better, for worse,
 for richer, for poorer,
 in sickness and in health,
 to love and to cherish,
till death do us part

Convention 1996 will be remembered for amongst other things Herman and Amy's greatly anticipated wedding announcement, pictured here on their wedding day on April 26th 1997. They were wed at Kent Town Wesley by Rev. "Auntie" Merrilyn Teague. (Photo by Lisa Khoo)

Congratulations to OCFers and ex-OCFers who had their wedding recently.

- December '96 Hui Hill Lee (OCF Flinders) and Dr. Wong in Singapore. Both of them are originally from Sarawak, Malaysia.
- February '97 Joann and Dennis in Singapore. Joann is from Hong Kong and Dennis is from Malaysia.
- February '97 Ellie (OCF Melbourne Uni) and Michael Sim. (OCF Melbourne Uni.) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Both are from Malaysia.
- April '97 Dr. Amy Chong (OCF Flinders) and Herman Chua (OCF Flinders) in Adelaide, Australia. Amy is from Brunei and Herman is from Malaysia.
- May '97 Winnie Lau (OCF Uni. of Queensland) and Paul Romo (OCF Uni. of Queensland) in Brisbane, Australia. Winnie is from Hong Kong and Paul is from Australia.
- June '97 Ngai Yeong Hia (OCF Adelaide) and Billie Chey (OCF Geelong) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Both are from Malaysia.
- June '97 Cheh Peng Lim (OCF Melbourne Uni.) and Melan Wee in Singapore. Cheh Peng is from Malaysia.
- July '97 Sook Yee Chan (OCF Flinders) and Vincent Law in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Sook Yee and Vincent are from Malaysia.
- July '97 Peak Hoay Mah (OCF Adelaide) and Edwin Lim (OCF Adelaide) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Both are from Malaysia.
- July '97 May Tan (OCF Melbourne Uni.) and Jin Fye
- July '97 Sandy Tan (OCF Melbourne Uni.) and Kelvin Khoo (OCF Parkville).
- August '97 Lay Peng Ong (OCF Adelaide) and Dave. Lay Peng is from Malaysia.

Weddings to look forward to.....

- September '97 May Kuan Lim (OCF Melbourne Uni.) and Dr. Joon Chong Lee (OCF Melbourne Uni.) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Both are from Malaysia.
- November '97 Lin Sum Tan (OCF Adelaide) and Matthew Woo (OCF Adelaide) in Singapore. Lin Sum is from Malaysia and Matthew is from Singapore.
- November '97 Noureen Marcus (OCF Adelaide/Uni. SA) and Chris Rainsford (OCF Adelaide/Uni. SA) in Sabah, Malaysia. Noureen is from Sabah, Malaysia and Chris is from Australia.
- December '97 Anne Kim (OCF Uni. of Queensland) and Terry Wal (OCF Uni. of Queensland) in Brisbane, Queensland. Anne is from Korea and Terry is from Australia.

"... what God has joined together, let man not separate." Mark 10:9

**"The Lord is good to all;
He has compassion on all he has made."**
Psalm 145 : 9

Many tribal people in Papua New Guinea know not the kindness and goodness of this Creator God. The Enemy has planted lies, distorting creation history. None of the myriad of stories about how they were created includes a loving God.

Instead, they believe spirit beings created them to make spot of their difficult existence. Life is a constant struggle to survive, enshrouded in the fear of these spirits and death. Many seek the motivating factor for doing missions work should neither be needs nor our own personal conviction about its importance, but rather, God's glory and lovemeaning of life and death, hoping for someone to communicate the truth to them.

Interface means Communication

In January this year, I went on a short-term mission trip to Papua New Guinea after signing up for *The Interface Program (ITF)* program with New Tribe Mission, designed for those interested to find out if God's calling for them is missions. The Sydney co-ordinator, Ray Cousin, wrote many letters to OCF district group leaders about it, one of which God used to change my heart. It is ITF that taught me the importance of communicating the gospel clearly.

Do I need a calling?

Before embarking on the trip, one big question was whether I had received a calling from God to go to PNG. In reality, many of us wonder about the exact nature of God's calling. "What is God's will for me when it comes to mission?"

I chose to take this opportunity to explore the possibility of God asking me to be a Missionary. Initially, I only had a stereotypical view of mission work - building the church, community development and house-to-house evangelism - which turned out to be wrong. God used this trip to correct those mistakes; to teach me who He is, who I was and my future role in missions.

Going with a wrong motive

I used to think that one important consideration in being a missionary was the great need conveyed by mission organisations or missionaries themselves. Often I felt a sense of urgency to get out there right away to save lost souls. I also thought that a missionary was a step up from average Christianity. However, the first thing we were told upon arrival was: the motivating factor for doing missions work should neither be needs nor our own personal conviction about its importance, but rather, God's glory and love.

The difference, I found out, is that needs are based on the strength of one's convictions about how urgent those needs are and in difficult times, conviction may waver with the temptation to give up. Salvation also becomes the missionary's initiative instead of God's initiative and gift to all mankind.

Why is it important to communicate clearly

The danger of syncretism also arises when we are motivated by needs. This means the truth about God is mixed with errors rising from other non-biblical teachings, or insufficient foundation is provided to help people understand the entire

salvation message.

Not all "Christians" in PNG truly understood the salvation message. Many accepted the teachings about Jesus, but incorporated their past beliefs and traditions into their Christian understanding. My language helper claims to be a Christian, speaks passionately about God, but has two wives and is given to drunkenness and violence.

Ironically, PNG, one of the most "missionised" countries in this region, has many so-called churches in close proximity to each other and concentrated in more developed areas, leaving rural areas relatively untouched. In some areas concurrent mission activities of different denominations cause ugly divisions, segregation and rivalry among the people. I realised that mission work has a political edge too, but is this the way God wants it?

Communication breakdown contributes to syncretism. Good communication with tribal members takes time and effort. When motivated by needs, the temptation to take short-cuts in our efforts to present the gospel increases. This does no justice to God's word or the people we are reaching out to. The best way to prevent syncretism is to learn the tribal language and understand their culture in order to teach God's word in native tongues.

How has the trip helped me in my ministry in OCF?

Essentially the OCF ministry is cross cultural as our members come from different countries. Sharing the gospel with tribal nationals has helped me understand the dynamics of cross cultural evangelism. I think a lot more about how I go about telling people about Jesus and more importantly, how the message is being understood. It is true that many international students are familiar with the English language so the potential for confusion may be less, but for many, English is not their mother tongue.

One missionary in PNG emphasized the importance of learning and using the native tongue because it communicates the idea that the God of the Bible is God over all cultures.

The motivating factor for doing missions work should neither be needs nor our own personal conviction about its importance, but rather, God's glory and love

You can go to Interface too

The Interface program was designed to provide knowledge about how to learn a new language and study tribal culture, with many opportunities for practical application. The most valuable lesson for me was how to present the gospel chronologically, so that it all made sense to the listener.

The week I spent in the Sepik region among the people of Itadi was truly a life-changing experience. It was a cultural experience in every sense. My course mates came from the USA, Canada, the Philippines, even Germany, gathering in one place to study mission. The cost of \$2500 was well worth it, with invaluable lessons learnt and good facilities. Thank you to my Church friends and OCF Sydney who supported me!

I encourage all OCFers to participate in this program. Do contact me if you have any further inquiries or if you want to find out more. K

Joshua Ling is a member of OCF Sydney. He hails from Malaysia and is currently studying at Macquarie University. Joshua can be contacted through Κοινωνία.

Papua New Guinea (Independent State of Papua New Guinea)

Geography

Area: 463,000 km².

Population (1995): 4,553,000 (2.6% annual growth).

Peoples: Ethnically and linguistically the world's most complex nation whose cultures have been moulded by geography, immigrations, sorcery, fear and warfare, and more recently by Christianity, colonialism, World War II and modernization. Melanesian 98%; Other 2%

Literacy: 43%. Official language: English. Trade language: Tok Pisin (neo-Melanesian)

Capital: Port Moresby (155,000). Urbanization: 14%



Economy

Predominantly subsistence agricultural/fishing economy, supplemented by cash crops, mining industry and increasing local manufacture.

Religion

Freedom of religion. Many Christians are in government, and the whole country is permeated with Christian values. Local nationalists and humanist anthropologists are exerting pressures to limit the activities of churches and missions.

Animist 2.1% Non-religious and other religions 1.1%
Christian 96.8%. Growth 2.8%

Internal Affair

The government faces a daunting task of uniting such a variety of peoples into a single nation. Tribal fighting and revenge killings still occur, especially in the Highlands. Social dislocation caused by the drift of people to the cities, and unemployment for the educated youth, have caused serious problems, including crime and violence.

Missionaries suffered disease and martyrdom at the hands of cannibals during the early days of church planting. The large investment of missionary personnel has significantly changed the land and its people.

Over the past 120 years the gospel has spread throughout PNG. Nearly all tribes have been reached. Today over 96% claim to be Christian, but the ready acceptance of the gospel has resulted in a nominal and superficial Christianity of the majority without a radical transformation of basic values and beliefs. True discipling is an urgent need.

Nepal (Kingdom of Nepal)

Geography

Area: 141,000 km².

Population (1995):

20,188,000 (2.1% annual growth).

Peoples:

Indo-Aryan 80.6%;

Tibeto-Burman 18.8%;

Other 0.6%

Literacy: 20%.

Capital: Kathmandu

(500,000).

Urbanization: 9%

Official language: Nepali



Economy

An isolated subsistence economy. The development of roads, agriculture and social projects has been slow. Main foreign exchange earners are tourism, agriculture and Gurkha soldiers. Heavily dependent on foreign aid and good relations with India. 40% living below the poverty line.

Religion

The world's only Hindu kingdom (Hinduism is the state religion). Since 1991 there has been freedom for all to profess and practise their religion, but not to proselytize.

Hindu 89% Buddhist 7% Muslim 3.4%

Christian 0.6%. Growth 13.4%

Internal Affair

For years witness among Nepalese was only possible in north India, but in 1951 the first opening for the gospel came. In the new freedoms, churches are springing up all over the country, and worship buildings are being erected. Most ethnic groups and castes are presented in this movement to Christ - a great contrast to north India.

Official persecution ended with the change of government in 1990, an amnesty for all religious prisoners and dismissal of outstanding court cases. Local pressure and persecution will probably continue as long as the churches multiply and grow.

Leadership is the critical bottleneck. For years, no training were allowed. This has rapidly changed with a number of Bible training institutions.

Missions have played a remarkable role in improving health, agriculture and education in a land hampered by disease, low life expectancy and illiteracy. Many Nepali Christians owe their conversion to the loving practical ministries of expatriates and the fervent witness of local believers.

Further reading: Patrick Johnstone (1993);

Operation World; 5th edition; OM Publishing, USA.



Nepal

by Reverend Merrilyn Teague



Class Of 1996

All 23 graduates from Kathmandu's Gospel For Asia (GFA) Bible School, originally from Bhutan, Darjeeling, Nagaland, and Nepal, were able to scoot off into the nearest town, thanks to the financial support of South Australian and Victorian OCFers. Currently, each one is faithfully serving the Lord, under the wing of a pastor.

Class Of 1997

According to the young GFA Principal's report, 37 new students have arrived in Kathmandu from all over Nepal and already praying for my time of teaching and ministry with them later this year. They also pray for OCF.

New Bible School Building

For the past 4 years GFA has paid out enormous sums of rental money, however last year the Lord enabled them to buy a small piece of land in the countryside. But building has not commenced due to lack of funds. Challenged by the Nepalese Director, students are praying for the necessary finance. OCF Australia responded in AGM 1996 by delegating the entire mission offering to Nepal. I will carry this substantial money over with me. Both the Director and Principal have already responded with sincere gratitude and surprise. Praise the Lord!

Upendra's Family in The Village

His father (a headman of 1500 Hindu villages living in very poor conditions, depending on rice crops) has sent the message requesting I spend an entire month in the village this year. This is where I have been conducting school (3-4 hours daily!) for 300 village children who have no opportunity to be educated - only a handful of them walks to another village. Here I also teach of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, with Sunday School papers printed in Hindi and colourful Biblical flash cards.

Teenager in The Village

Family members and close friends of Upendra (a current Newcastle OCFer - Ed), have been fortunate because his father owns land for crops, thus financing not only his own three sons' education, but other fostered ones, to give them opportunities he never had. He is very gracious, generous, humble and tender-hearted as father and headman of the village.

The first trip in 1994, I was able to witness to these teenage lads. I arranged for a Nepalese Bible to be sent to them, which, sadly, never left the capital. But, prayer is powerful. The second trip in 1995, I had the great joy of leading three of them to the Lord Jesus, whilst travelling and bumping the dusty road, in a bullock cart, on my way out of the village to catch a bus. (They believed He was the Son of God and simply accepted.) The

third trip in 1996, I found all three had grown in the Lord with no pastor, no youth leader, no Bible study, no Christian fellowship, no church, but Jesus Christ is their Lord and Saviour.

They do now have a Bible and book "Come Follow Me!" Also, I had the great joy of leading another four to Jesus. Recently, I received a letter from Nepal clearly stating the names of these young men who have communicated to others that they are Christian and want to be discipled to follow Jesus Christ - nothing gives greater joy!



J e s u s

Ministry Trip 1997

Invitation has come from GFA to visit and lecture in their new Bible school in Sikkim. Also a prayer walk into Buddhist Bhutan. As well, I will continue the rare privilege of discipling Tibetans and spend a couple of weeks living and working in the village. I will be over there in September until late November. **Your prayers are an investment for the extension of God's Kingdom. Will you be my prayer partner for Jesus' sake? Matthew 25:40; Philippians 1:3-6; 1:19-21. X**

Reverend Merrilyn Teague is a pastor of Austral-Asian Christian Church in Adelaide. She is also an advisor of OCF Flinders and the Resource Person of OCF Australia.

Continuation from page 9 . . .

Lim May Kuan completed her Bachelor of Engineering / Bachelor of Science in the University of Melbourne in 1993 and currently works with Malaysia's first satellite television channel, Astro. Read on, find out how God's plan, timing and presence are perfect, even arranging for her to meet the man of her dreams!!!

Price Hall (Little Lonsdale St) was crowded with overseas students that summer night. A homesick Year 12 student having difficulties adjusting to boarding school life, I was moved to tears by a simple skit and song presentation. "Among friends, among Christians," I thought. Such was my first encounter with OCF. I became a regular OCF Parkville member in 1990 when university classes began. I moved into the famous house with a red door. My new housemates were all committed Christians and our household operated based on trust and love. Their faith and zeal was contagious. OCF quickly became an important part of my life. In the second semester, it was clear to me whether to remain in OCF Parkville or join the newly founded OCF Melbourne Uni. I was so eager to be part of the new group.

The birth of OCF Melbourne Uni certainly fell in with God's timing. Overseas students on campus were open and receptive.

Right: *May Kuan and Joon Chong on the day after their engagement in January 1997.*

Below: *The household of 6 Haines Street, Melbourne, in 1991. From left: Tsung Yun, Lee Nah, Cindy, Shu Hsin, May Kuan.*

Under Lee Nah's strong leadership and emphasis on personal one-to-one discipleship, OCF Melbourne Uni grew rapidly. I served first as Prayer Secretary and was Vice-Chairman to Lee Joon Chong in 1991. After two years, his country medical attachments prevented him from continuing to serve as Chairman and I assumed the role for a year. Usually one to support from the sidelines rather than take lead, I struggled with the many duties that did not come naturally to me. However, God supplied where I lacked with a good committee and resource persons.

In all those years, it was very exciting to see the marvelous things God did in our midst. The committee, being young and inexperienced, always sought God on many matters, telling him, "We have not been this way before." One of the greatest rewards was to see people who seemed "unlikely" converts come to the LORD and serve Him selflessly. On a personal level, I came to know God more intimately. It was a new experience to hear God's voice and know His Spirit's



promptings. It was also a privilege to meet and work with countless men and women of great faith whose example inspired me. I remained single most of six years of student life. In the early years, Joon Chong used to tease me about falling into the "final year syndrome" whereby I would grab the first fellow who came along my way for fear of remaining a spinster all my life. However, I told God early on that I would rather be single than marry the wrong man.

I met many wonderful brothers in Christ but none seemed compatible nor shared similar vision and goals. However, six months before graduating, Joon Chong approached me about starting a relationship. After much soul searching and seeking God, we agreed to "get to know one another better" first before making a firm decision. This amused my mother who noted that we had already worked together for 4 years. The months went by quickly and pleasantly. In January 1995, we decided to go steady. Since then, we have continued our relationship long distance. I returned to KL whilst he completed his final year and served the Kuching General Hospital, East Malaysia. Having been unattached for so long, I had accepted the possibility that I might never marry. I fight an occasional tinge of sadness, for I believe one can live a very full and enriched life as a single person. Strangely, when I least expected it, God provided a dear friend and co-worker to be my future husband. The theme for our wedding, in September this year, is that "God makes all things beautiful in His time."

I enjoyed the family life of the church I attended in Melbourne. Although I did not serve actively, their focus made my views on missions more serious and practical. After returning to Malaysia, I joined the Sungei Way-Subang Methodist Church (SSMC). I was drawn by their vision to reach out to people in the surrounding slum areas and strong mission emphasis. I joined a care group almost immediately and without their fellowship, I would have been just another face in a congregation of 300 people. Six months later, I became an assistant care group leader among college students. My OCF experience equipped me for this task but I feel I still fall short in many areas of pastoral care. Skill alone is not enough. It is the heart that counts.

I went on SSMC mission trips to eastern Cambodia (December 1996) and eastern Myanmar among the Shan people (April 1997). I shared on Youth Leadership, about how a grain of wheat remains a single seed unless it falls to the ground and dies (John). As I challenged young people to give up small self-ambitions and embrace God's larger ambition for their lives, it was like looking in the mirror. I was challenged afresh as to what I was doing with my life.

The working experience with Astro has given me insight into the working world and common pressures. I struggled with the question of whether 20 extra television channels would bring more good or harm to the nation and concluded that more Christians are needed in broadcasting work to bring good programs that inform, entertain, yet edify. Whilst setting up a closed circuit television system to carry satellite programs for the office, some images which I knew did not glorify God disturbed me. To control my mind against the media or unholy thoughts, I found it effective to engage in thoughts and activities which pleased God. The replacement of bad with good became a natural process.

When I was posted overseas for training programs, God always provided Christian fellowship. Imagine traveling to Darmstadt, Germany to meet Indonesian Christians at a church service for American military personnel! It was all very exciting and showed me God's perfect plan, timing and His presence, no matter where in the world I was.

My biggest struggle today remains to spend quality time with God. I confess that I long for the zeal I had in OCF. Ex-OCFers, Hon and Voon Ling, told us that writing mission statements on what you thought God wanted you to do in your life was useful. Through the years, it reminds me of the vision God placed in my heart. Sometimes I find it waning but each time I take stock of my life or make major plans, I try to do so in line with what God has placed in my heart. When it is hard to hold on, I recall ex-OCF Parkville chairman Hii Howe Shiing's favorite encouragement to others, to "Press On." ✕

Photographs courtesy of Associate Professor Lawrence Chia, Dr Harrold and Mrs Gwenda Steward, and May Kuan Lim.

All That I Have

In Peter Deison's book *The Priority of Knowing God*, he tells about an occasion when President Eisenhower of the United States was addressing the National Press Club. He opened his remarks by apologizing because he was not a great orator. Then he told his audience that his situation reminded him of a boyhood experience on a Kansas farm.

Eisenhower recalled, "An old farmer had a cow that we wanted to buy. We went over to visit him and asked about the cow's pedigree. The old farmer didn't know what pedigree meant, so we asked him about the cow's butterfat production. He told us that he hadn't any idea. Finally, we asked him if he knew how many pounds of milk the cow produced each year. The farmer shook his head and said, 'I don't know. But she's an honest old cow and she'll give you all the milk she has!'"

Eisenhower then concluded his opening remarks, "Well, I'm like the cow: I'll give you everything I have."

In Colossians 3:23-24, Apostle Paul reminds us to serve the Lord in whatever we do with all of our heart. A significant and often overlooked way that we serve God is in our everyday tasks. Martin Luther understood this when he wrote, "The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays – not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship."

The Lord doesn't expect from us any more than we have to offer, but He does want us to be faithful and to provide a quality of service that comes from doing our very best. May we say willingly and gladly, "Lord, I'll give you all that I have." – HC

centraline

South Australia

Recently South Australian OCFers attended the Servants Retreat held in the Adelaide hills. It was a good combined effort of the three OCF centres in SA - Adelaide, Flinders, and University of South Australia.

The aim is to train OCFers in the Word of God and encourage them to deeper commitment in Christ. The theme was *Running the Race (Hebrew 12:1)* and the main speaker was David McGregor. The fellowship was shared around the campfire and marshmallow on the last night.

Through out the year many rededicated their life to Christ while others accepted Christ as their Saviour for the first time and are in fellowship with God.

The theme for OCF Adelaide this year is *Unity in Christ (Ephesians 2:19-22)*, whereas for OCF USA it is *Know Him and Make Him Known! (1 Chronicles 16:8-12)*.

OCF USA had Friendship Day as part of their evangelistic activities where members were assigned into several house fellowship groups. It encourages OCFers to reach out to people around them and genuinely make friend with them.

Recently OCF USA involved in the semester 2 Orientation and about 15 people joined their fellowship. Later in September they will be having a Spring Retreat.

The next big thing in agenda for SA centres is the Annual General Meeting, which will be held concurrently in the respective centres in September. Please pray for them and the incoming committee members as they are preparing to continue the work of God.

Tasmania

For the past months, it has been a tough and yet privileged time for the group in Hobart to learn of God's faithfulness and His grace that sustain us in all things. They had a marvellous Easter Camp and also a very short leaders' session with Rev. Allan Webb while he was visiting Tasmania with OMF in May.

Recently Hobart OCFers participated in a Bible Conference with the theme *The End*, which was organised by the Fellowship of Christian University Students (FOCUS), in July.

OCF Hobart had their AGM on 1 August 1997. Pray that the leaders may embrace the vision of OCF and seek to fulfil that in their role. Pray also for a group of non-Christian students that has been attending the meetings regularly that they may know the grace of God and His plan of salvation for them.

Australian Capital Territory

OCF Canberra has been blessed with the new Cell Group structure. With this system, they have been able to reach out and care for members and increased their regular members to about 30.

They had Winter Camp recently and were refreshed and touched by God's Word. They also had Dinner and Dance, for the first time, as a part of their outreach activities.

By the end of this year, many of current leaders will return to their home country. Pray that God will provide committed people to carry on the work.

Queensland

The three OCF centres in Queensland are privileged to host OCF

Australia Annual Convention at the end of this year (see page 20). Do pray for the preparation in doing what the Lord has entrusted them.

They also had their combined Easter Camp and Winter Camp. Many were touched and encouraged to know Christ more. Now they are preparing for an evangelistic rally called *OCF Alive*. Pray that members be committed to be Christ's witnesses.

OCF University of Queensland will be having their AGM on 12 September. Pray that God will bring many godly leaders.

Quiz Night was one of the highlights in OCF Griffith. The theme was taken from Mark chapters 1 to 10. Many of their "dangerous animal" instinct came out as they compete against each other. In spite of that, the Quiz Night was a good opportunity to study the Word of God in exciting ways and strengthen the bond of friendship by sharing lots of laughs and joyful tears. Thank God there weren't any casualties.

La Trobe, Victoria

OCF La Trobe had Mission Night. Paul Jamieson who is going to Russia with Co-Mission came and gave his personal testimony. Through this, members become more aware for what is a missionary do in other countries.

They also attended the Change the World School of Prayer which was a day seminar run by Every Home for Christ, a missionary organisation taking the Gospel through door to door evangelism. It was organised by their church - Swanston Street Church of Christ. Many questions were answered and it teaches them how to live effectively for Jesus Christ.

Clayton, Victoria

The change in the management of Monash University Club & Societies compel OCF Clayton to revise their Constitution to remain accessible to Monash C&S benefits. It caused difficulty for non-Monash students to be admitted as full members. Forming an "OCF Monash" sub-group consisted of Monash students only, and a subsidiary OCF Clayton to allow non-Monash students to be part of the fellowship solved this problem. As result, "OCF Monash" would still abide by the regulations demanded by the Monash C&S, while OCF Clayton could act independently under the guidance of

God's will.

OCF Clayton had July Camp and the theme was *Knowing The Father's Heart (John 17:3)*. They also had leaders' retreat recently to review their progress. Currently the members are preparing for the Evangelistic Night. Please pray that their effort will be effective and efficient. Also pray for the AGM in September.

Curtin, Western Australia

God has really blessed OCF Curtin with about 45 odd people in their fellowship this year. They are also celebrating their 7th anniversary that was well attended by WA OCFers and

members of church organisations.

Care groups are introduced this year in OCF Curtin, which function outside the normal programs to study the Bible. Pray that the members of the groups will continually seeking God and grow in Him.

Recently they had Winter Retreat whereby both the regular and new members were challenged to answer God's calling. Twelve new students were welcomed into their fellowship prior to the retreat.

They had AGM on 16 August. Praise God for the members who took up the challenge to lead the group. Do uphold them in prayer.

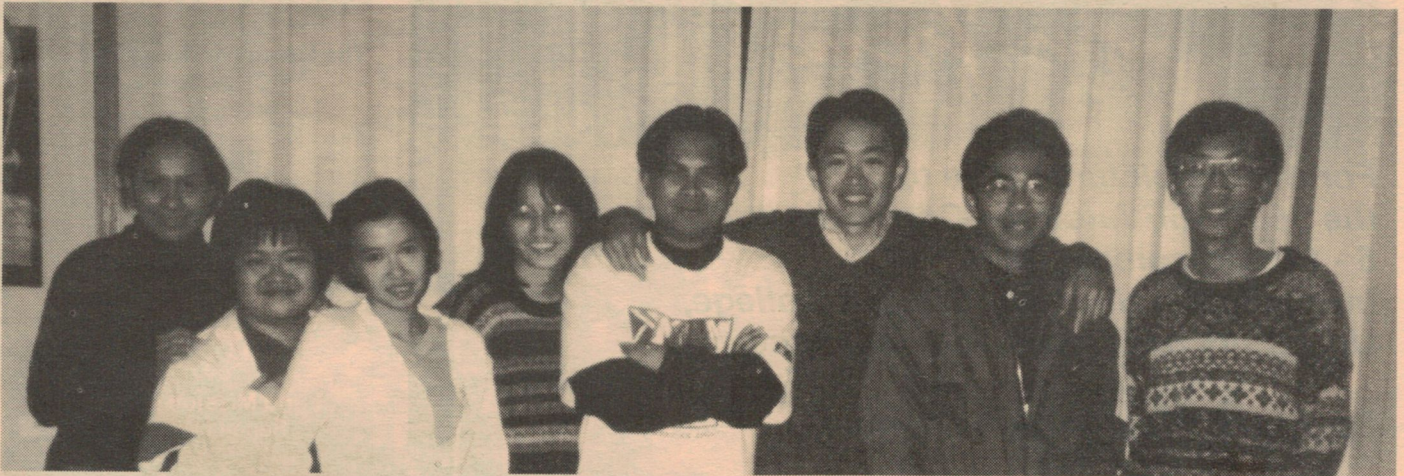
OCF in Taz-Mania

Three South Australian OCFers, Barry and myself had a taste of warm Tasmanian hospitality whom we visited from 1st to 4th May 1997. We were greatly encouraged by the obvious spiritual growth in the OCF Hobart. About 25 vibrant people meet weekly on campus for praise, worship, and Bible study, and many are excited about proclaiming the Gospel to the students in University of Tasmania.

During the visitation, we also took the opportunity to visit the International Student Fellowship in Launceston. After talking to the leaders of the group, we learnt that about 20 people meet weekly for fellowship and there is some interest in. The time we spent in Launceston, though short, was very encouraging.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our host both in Hobart and Launceston for their warm fellowship and hospitality.

Tuck Yean Yong



EXCO and OCF Hobart Committee. From left: Kathryn, Mai Ming, Dafne, Eleanor, Erryl, Barry, Cary, and Tuck Yean.

39th OCF (Australia) Annual General Meeting

12th December (after the Annual Convention)
at the International House, University of Queensland, Brisbane
More details coming soon.
All are encouraged to attend!!



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38th

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1997

Brisbane

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Executive Editor
Tuck Yean YONG

**TEAM KOINONIA
Editor**
Haryady CHANDRA

Associate Editor
Sue Min OOI

Art Director
Raymond THAM

Editorial Correspondence
P. O. Box 358
Goodwood 5034 South Australia
(08) 8371 4042
koinonia@iname.com

"All glory and honor be unto God"

Vision of OCF

To reach out to and build up
overseas Christian students.

To prepare and to send them
back for home ministries.

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