

Keystone

The Journal of Christian Home Schoolers

of New Zealand

Vol. VIII No. 2

March 2002

Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth. – Psalm 112: 1-2



Featured Family
Colin & Jillian Jeffries
Jemima (10), Paul (23), Sarah (22)
Angela (13), Victoria (5), Priscilla (17)
Esther (19), Stephen (3), Lydia (20), Rebecca (13)

KEYSTONE

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KEYSTONE is the journal of Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand, a part of the Home Education Foundation, a Charitable Trust established to promote the concept of home education to the Christian community and beyond.

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*The fear of the LORD is the
beginning of wisdom,
a good understanding have all those
who do His commandments.
— Psalm 111:10*

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It was Henry R. Van Til, in The Calvinistic Concept of Culture (1959) who stated that "culture" is religion externalised. Look at the expressions of our culture today: hatred, violence, murder, infanticide, anti-Christianity, immorality, drugs and other crimes. The religion, the faith which our popular culture externalises is demonic.

Oh, Lord, please give us the wisdom and vision to home educate our children for Your Glory. May they not only live and work honourably as Christ-like role models in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation but also fearlessly, tirelessly, lovingly offer

Editorial



I'm 51 years old. My Dad only lived until 43. His dad only made it to 45. Barbara's Mum died at 57. A friend of mine *aged only 39* with six children recently died of a heart attack. These considerations really bring certain things into perspective. One thing in particular.

Our time is short.

The Scriptures tell me I can reckon on three score and 10 years (70). That means I've got 19 to go. For crying out loud, I have two children older than 19! Let me tell you in all seriousness, as I consider all I was planning to do with those two....and realise all that got left undone....19 years can be gone in what seems like the snap of the fingers.

Not long ago I was involved in a situation which ruptured a formerly good relationship with a Brother in Christ. He is old enough to be my father. I have been counselled by some who know this Brother to let it lie for a few years, just five or so, and not try to talk it through now for it is just too stressful. Five years! The Brother could well be gone by then. How will I answer to the Lord if this Brother should go before we are reconciled? How will he answer to the Lord? I would certainly not want to carry that to my grave, and I am further concerned that my Brother appears prepared to do just that. No, the Scriptures say to seek peace and pursue it (Psalm 34:14); as far as it depends upon me, I am to live peaceably with all (Romans 12:18).

When I look at my children and consider their development in all areas, at what Barbara and I by God's grace have accomplished with the older ones and how much better we *should* do with the younger ones, I get *very* concerned about time. Why? Because we have so often let the good become the enemy of the best. We have too many times yielded to the demands of the urgent request to do something even very good, something that really needed doing, something we personally wanted to see done, but something which ultimately could have been done by someone else, or left undone *because* it took us away from doing what was a higher priority for us, from fulfilling our calling as parents. But oh, we said, there will be plenty of time to catch up with the kids later on. But the message that idea sends to the children, the development they do in the meantime, the kinks in their characters left uncorrected, the uncounted hours of one-to-one bonding time given to some other project rather than to my child's development, the simple but shocking fact that "later on" never comes....we see now that we have made some bad decisions with our time and commitments, said "Yes" when we should have said "No".

Commit your time and resources to your children. Then stick to your guns. You will be slandered and reviled for putting your family before other people and things

Contents

Feature Family

Colin & Jillian Jeffries.....p. 5

The Faith of Us Fathers

Women and Children First.....p. 7

Home Educators Did It

Canan Barkley, Amberley.....p. 9

Learning Disabilities

Education Recovery Mission.....p. 10

Bits of Books

Bianca, You Animal!
by John Taylor Gatto.....p. 13

Home Education Research

Canadian Home Education.....p. 14

Exploring God's Creation

Life at the Extremes.....p. 16

Book Reviews

Understanding the Times
by David Noebel.....p. 19
Summit Ministries
Review by Genevieve Smith.....p. 19

Letters.....p. 20

Strengthening Support Groups

Shore Home Educators' Network.....p. 21

Teaching Tips

Choosing Children's Literature.....p. 22
Write Your Own Transcripts.....p. 22

CHomeS Roundup

Editor Meets Prominent
US Home Educators.....p. 23

World Views in Focus

A Letter from a NZ Home Educating Mum to
Her Son in January 2002, Pt.2.....p.25

who have far less valid claim on your time. It will be painful. But as the Scripture promises, discipline is painful for the present. But later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness...that is, *it proves to have been the right thing to do* (Hebrews 12:11). Encourage others to join you on this lonely path, but time is short: if some don't want to come, leave them behind and encourage others. The Scriptures tell us we can leave the peaceful fruit of righteousness till later on....but let us not leave our children till later on any more.

TEACH Bulletin (Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home) is a monthly newsletter of the Home Education Foundation. Articles deal with political developments which may affect New Zealand home educators, statist and professional trends, correspondence with politicians and educationalists, and other items of general interest to home educators. Published since January 1997, **TEACH Bulletin** has been used to sound legislative alerts, rallying home educators to write submissions to their MPs and Parliamentary Select Committees when legislation unfavourable to home educators was introduced into Parliament. The six-page newsletter comes out 11 times a year (none in December) for an annual subscription of NZ\$16 or two years for NZ\$30.

The Home Education Foundation is a charitable trust established to serve, promote and strengthen the home education community in New Zealand. Since November 1998 the Foundation has contracted Craig & Barbara Smith (whose six children are all totally home educated) to serve the home education community full-time. They are continuing to build on their volunteer work since 1986 in the areas of publishing (such as *Keystone* and *TEACH Bulletin*), counselling, correspondence with politicians and educationalists, lobbying, researching issues of concern to home educators, running National Leadership Forums (annually since 1996) and National Christian Home Education Conferences (six since 1987), initiating the National Home Education Awareness Week, moderating five home education email discussion groups, producing media releases, speaking at local seminars, hosting overseas speaker tours, and networking among local support groups and with overseas home schooling organisations. Their efforts are conducted under the eye of the Home Education Foundation's Trustees and a Board of Reference which represents 21 locations all over New Zealand.

The Home Education Foundation, Christian Home Schoolers of New Zealand and the projects they take on are supported entirely by home educators subscribing to *Keystone* and/or *TEACH Bulletin*, investing in a TimeChart or making tax-deductible donations either by cheque, credit card or by automatic bank payment (ask us for a form). The Foundation can also be supported through Telecom and Clear who both give a percentage (5% & 2.5% respectively) of your toll bill to the Foundation, *painlessly and without costing you an extra cent!* Telecom subscribers can ring 0800 724 665 and ask to support the Home Education Foundation, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Telecom's "School Connection" Programme. Clear subscribers can ring 0508 888 800 and ask to support the Home Education Foundation, ph. (06) 357-4399, through Clear's "Friends of the School" Programme. Please ring today!

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Feature Family

Colin & Jillian Jeffries

of Motueka, Nelson

Left to Right: Esther, 19, Paul 23, Victoria 5, Lydia 20, Priscilla 17, Stephen 3, Sarah 22, Jemima 10, Rebecca 13, Angela 13.

Hi, we are Colin and Jillian Jeffries and family. We live in Brooklyn Valley near Motueka on a farm of approx 100 hectares with apples, cattle and pine forest. God has blessed us with 10 children (pictured above).

The church we were a part of taught from the Scriptures the importance of Christian education, and we firmly believed in it and wanted this for our children. Our older children began in a Christian school using ACE curriculum. As time went on and circumstances changed, we became aware of home schooling as a far more practical way of educating our children and instilling the family values we wanted them to have.

Going back a bit: Jillian was brought up in a non-Christian family, the middle child of five girls. She became a Christian at a Bible club at the age of thirteen. Colin was brought up in a Christian family of six children, with three older sisters and one younger sister and brother.

Colin: It was after attending a funeral of one of my Aunties that I got to thinking, “Why had my Auntie’s children to a large degree not followed the ways of the Lord, whereas our family had?” My father and his sister (my Auntie) would have had the same family input, etc., yet the results were totally different. As I pondered this, God showed me some things which have shaped my parenting. Genesis 18:19 says, talking of Abraham, “For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord”.

Deuteronomy 4:9-10 & Deuteronomy 6:3-9 talk about being diligent at teaching the word of God to our children and to our grandchildren.

Psalm 127 begins with, “Except the Lord build a house, they labour in vain that build it”; so we need to call upon the Lord for the establishment of our families. Verses 4-5 talk about arrows in the hand of a mighty man, “happy is the man whose quiver is full of them”. A man who carries around a quiver with arrows in it would have to be a warrior. I believe God is calling fathers to be warriors on behalf of their families in this world against humanism and many other “isms” that would endeavour to pull down the family unit. Ultimately the warrior, after sharpening his arrows, polishing the shaft, trimming the feathers so they will fly straight and true, will mount the arrow in the bow and pull the string tight and fire the arrow forth to hit the mark, destroy the works of the evil one and establish a new out-post of heaven in this earth.

These are some of the things that keep me going through the difficulties and trying times of being a parent in this day and age.

Jillian: Five of our children have finished their studies at home and moved on to other areas. It has been exciting to see the way God has led each of them as we have sought the Lord’s direction for each one.

Paul is now living in Sydney. Initially he went there to complete a two-year music course at Hillsong. We had hoped he would return after the course, but he

felt to work in a Hills satellite church as a music director in St Marys, a suburb of Sydney. This Christmas we were privileged to have Paul come home and bring Sally, a lovely young lady, to seek our blessing upon their possible marriage. We are excited to announce that on the 6th of July Paul and Sally will be married in Australia. We will be there!!

Sarah, even as a young child, always wanted to be a nurse. She never changed her mind on this issue. At 16 we began to look at possible ways to gain entry into the nursing program and found a pre-degree course that she was able to enter. She completed this and was given automatic entry to the degree course. Sarah completed the degree course and graduated in December 2000. The day of Sarah's capping was an exciting and emotional time for us all. Sarah had completed a milestone in her life. Sarah has worked for the last two years at Greymouth Hospital, gaining the practical experience which is so much needed these days in the medical field. Practical skills are very limited in classroom learning.

Another area that brought a smile to my lips was when our local MP Nick Smith shook Sarah's hand in congratulations at her capping. Five years prior to this event, while Nick Smith was the minister of education, he had written an article in the local newspaper, *The Nelson Evening Mail*. He had headed the article "At Risk Children". The article was about homeschooled children being an "at risk" sector of the community, because their parents were limiting their opportunities to tertiary level education and a future. It stirred me enough to ring his office and make an appointment with him. I have no idea if our meeting had any positive outcome, but I felt better for it.

Lydia initially did not know what she wanted to do. She did enjoy children, so we looked into areas that involved children, nannying, early childhood education and primary teaching. One day flicking through a careers magazine we came across Masters Christian Teachers' College in Auckland, and Lydia had a real witness that this is where God wanted her.

I was dubious about this as Lydia had suffered severe home sickness, but Lydia had such excitement about the possibility of training at Masters that we pursued it. Lydia is now in her third year at Masters and loves it!! She boards with a lovely homeschooling family. (Hello to the Allens!) This year we are all going up to Auckland to celebrate Lydia's 21st birthday. This is going to be a very busy year.

Esther is in her second year at Otago University studying dental therapy. The Lord undertook in a mighty way for Esther to study at Otago. Initially Esther's application to dental therapy was declined. I felt it was not right for her to do another year at home, so we began going around all the dentists hoping to find a dental assistant's job. Nothing came of our efforts. As the new school year approached, I could see no option but to do another year's

schooling at home. I didn't feel it was the right thing to do but what else?

Esther and I discussed the subjects that would best equip her for applying the following year. To make sure we were heading in the right direction, I rang the liaison officer for Otago university. After finding out what qualifications Esther had, she encouraged us to re-apply under provisional entry. We did this and Esther was accepted! Praise God!! Last year was a wonderful year for Esther. She loves dental work and has really blossomed in every way in Dunedin. The Dental School awarded her a \$1000 grant for excellence in her classes, which is such an encouragement. God is good.

Priscilla our fourth daughter loves the outdoors and is all for adventure. So when we became aware of a conservation corps program in Reefton, we checked it out. Our initial thoughts were to apply for the course when she was 18, but a place became available at the beginning of this year, and with the support of the corps we were able to send Priscilla on the course. This is a live-in course of five months and is diverse in its program. They learn bushcraft, management skills, navigation, abseiling, kayaking, whitewater rafting, tramping, etc. Priscilla's passion is Christian Camping, and this course is a stepping stone for her future.

Angela, Rebecca and Jemima are all at different stages in their education, and I have just completed the ABC's of ACE with Victoria. She is doing well with her reading and writing.

Stephen is a real joy to have in the home and quite enjoys going with Colin out on the farm to do various chores. He is also quite fond of "reading" books and spends lots of time each day with his books, Pooh Bear being a favourite. Stephen and Victoria spend time playing with each other quite often, and it is a joy to see them enjoying one another's company.

As a family we have always enjoyed doing things together. We have done quite a bit of tramping, sailing, waterskiing and travelling holidays around New Zealand and to Australia a few times. We also really enjoy music as a family, and having worship times together has been a real blessing. Amongst the family we have three keyboard players, clarinet, violin, flute, pan flute, soprano sax, tenor sax and guitar. These times of worship together have bought a real unity and a oneness in the family which we give thanks to God for.

The Faith of Us Fathers

Women & Children First

by Craig Smith

April 14 this year marks exactly 90 years since hundreds of men made a self-conscious decision to die rather than let their wives and their children face death in the icy waters of the North Atlantic. The decision was not made because of a command by Captain Edward John Smith of the *Titanic*, although the words were spoken: it was a principle understood by virtually all on board. It constituted part of the world view of all those people, even coming as they did from very different educational backgrounds, social strata and economic groups. It was not a concept many had ever thought about before, but one they had simply absorbed from the fundamentally Christian societies in which they were reared.

Much is made of the class distinctions on board, and indeed they existed; the well-to-do of the day did not want to associate with the poor immigrants who in fact made up the “bread & butter” business of the ocean liners then. But even the First Class passengers were not kicking up their heels the way we today would imagine them doing at the time the *Titanic* struck the iceberg that Sunday night. The ship did not have a ballroom, and on British liners dancing was frowned upon on Sundays.¹

It makes you wonder if even those pleasure-seeking people of 1912 were from the same planet as we today. Consider how men, wealthy men from the First Class section, stood back to let third class washer-women immigrants claim those scarce seats in the few lifeboats. Consider how husbands lifted their wives and children into the lifeboats, looking into their eyes and kissing them for what they knew would be the last time on earth, then stood back to let others flee to safety.

Accounts indicate that very few of the men even tried to get into the lifeboats, and most

were turned back with a glance or a word. Many of the wives, especially the older couples, decided to stay together, allowing the younger ladies to go. They would rather pass from this life together than be separated at that late date in their lives. This was true across social boundaries. One newlywed couple, on their honeymoon, decided to remain together as well. For better or for worse...²

One widower, Dr Robert J. Bateman, escorted his sister-in-law to a lifeboat and said, “Don’t be nervous, Annie. This will test our faith. I must stay and let the women go. If we never meet again on this earth, we will meet again in heaven.” He threw his handkerchief into the descending lifeboat saying, “Put that around your throat. You’ll catch cold.” Earlier that evening he had conducted the only religious service aboard that ship of 2,207 people, concluding with his favourite hymn “Nearer my God to Thee”.³

Dr. Bateman collected about fifty men on the stern of the ship and told them to prepare for death. He led them in saying the Lord’s Prayer.³ About this time a string quartet was playing at the request of one of the senior officers. They had played ragtime and livelier selections earlier, before they knew the extent of their situation. The leader of the quartet then dismissed the rest, for their task was hopeless. Alone he began to play the hymn he’d done at the religious service, “Nearer my God to Thee”. All of his companions returned and joined him. They played hymn upon hymn, turning people’s hearts to come to grips with the fact that they were standing on the brink of eternity.^{1,2,3}

Doug Phillips of Vision Forum in San Antonio, Texas, told the *Titanic* story of “women and children first” to an audience of 200 Japanese Christians in March 2001, emphasising that this was once an unquestioned

principle of Western society, mirroring the fact that Jesus Christ is the protector and defender of His bride, the Church. A woman came to speak to him afterwards. "She was Cantonese and had left communist China for freedom in Japan. She looked at me for a while without speaking, but her lips were quivering, and it was obvious she was trying to hold back the tears. 'I was never told,' she said. 'No one has ever told me that men are to protect women... It is such a beautiful thought, but no one has ever told me this.'"⁴

The religious and philosophical views common in east Asia definitely reflect a different world view. According to Phillips the Japanese Ambassador wrote the following just after the *Titanic* disaster to the American Ambassador: "In our country it would have been men first, children second, and women last."⁴

John Harper had only just turned 40 years old when he boarded the *Titanic* with his only daughter, six-year-old Nana. Maybe the Lord had been preparing him for an icy, watery grave, for John almost drowned several times during his life. When he was two and a half, he fell into a well but was resuscitated by his mother. At the age of 26 he was swept out to sea by a rip and barely survived, and at 32 he faced death on a leaking ship in the Mediterranean.⁵

When their hopeless situation became obvious, this widower immediately took his daughter to a lifeboat. The flares going off in the dark sky above reflected the tears on his face as he turned and headed towards the crowd of desperate humanity on the sinking ocean liner. As the rear of the huge ship began to lurch upwards, it was reported that Harper was seen making his way up the deck yelling, "Women, children and unsaved into the lifeboats!" Minutes later the *Titanic* began to rumble deep within. What people thought was an explosion was actually the gargantuan ship breaking in half, just between the third and fourth smokestacks. At this point, many people jumped off the decks and into the icy, dark waters below. John Harper was one of these people.⁵

That night 1528 people went into the frigid waters. Only six were picked up by the life boats. One was a young man who had climbed onto a piece of debris. At a survivors' meeting in 1916 this young man stood up and in tears told how John Harper was swimming frantically to people in the water, leading them to Jesus before the hypothermia became fatal. He told how when he replied "No" to Harper's entreaty to receive Jesus Christ as his Saviour, John Harper took off his own life jacket and threw it to the man saying, "Here then, you need this more than I do," and swam away to other people. By God's grace, a few minutes later Harper swam back to the young man and succeeded in leading him to salvation. He recounted how Harper had tried to swim back to help other people, yet because of the intense cold had grown too weak to swim. His last words before going under were, "Believe on the Name of the Lord Jesus and you will be saved."⁵

It is a stirring thing, Brothers, to hear of men such as Bateman and Harper who, when the chips are down,

come through in stirring form. But know that these men did not appear suddenly from nowhere as do imaginary heroes such as Superman or Batman. No, these men had already produced track records of service to others, selflessness and a total focus on Jesus Christ and His word as the only source of truth and reliable guidance for life and death.

Robert Bateman was the founder of the Central City Mission in Jacksonville, Florida, a minister who was not afraid to get his hands dirty. He came from England to personally lay the bricks of the Mission in the city where drunken sailors poured into tattoo parlours, bars and whorehouses. While sharing the Gospel, he provided thousands of meals, clothed the needy, visited those in jail and housed the homeless. He was called "the man who distributed more human sunshine than any other in Jacksonville." He had returned briefly to England to study methods of Christian social work.³

John Harper was born to a pair of solid Christian parents on May 29th, 1872; became a Christian at 13; and began to preach at 17 by going down to the streets of his village and pouring out his soul in earnest entreaty for men to be reconciled to God. He did this for at least five years while working in the mill during the day. He was then taken in by Rev. E. A. Carter of Baptist Pioneer Mission in London, England, which set Harper free to devote his whole time and energy to the work so dear to his heart. John Harper soon started his own church in September of 1896, now known as the Harper Memorial Church. This church started with just 25 members and grew to over 500 members when he left 13 years later.⁵

Bateman and Harper were well used to giving all to others, and when the chips were down, they did what they had trained themselves to do: give their all to meet the situation, trusting wholly in Jesus Christ for the strength to persevere under trial.

Brothers and Sisters, we are under trial now. Surely you all perceive it. New Zealand society is rabidly anti-Christian, and the forces arrayed against the family are gaining in strength and numbers. My own MP, Steve Maharey, is talking about increasing the compulsory schooling age to 19. Others have suggested it be extended at the younger end down to three. Our present government is committed to pouring all kinds of money into ECE, early childhood educational enterprises, to encourage more and more parents to leave their pre-schoolers with well-funded and credentialed strangers.

Doug Phillips points out the obvious fact that "women and children first" is not inculcated in state schools. He says a major poll conducted several years ago saw boys declaring they would never give up their seat on a lifeboat for a woman. "They want their rights," one boy said. "Let them fight for their own lifeboat seats. They won't get mine."⁴ So many state schools are no more than institutionalised places of mediocrity and brutality where parents who dare to speak up are ostracised and their children victimised....by the

teachers, now, as well as by the playground bullies! I hear this kind of thing from different sets of such parents every week, and the stories are beyond belief. The March 2002 edition of *Pro-Life Times* has an interesting statistic: 74% of girls who lost their virginity said they did so *at home*.....around 4pm.....just after school and before parents came home from work.

We are thrilled our children no longer have to attend such places. But we all know that home education is not a piece of cake. We meet plenty of trials here too. The question is: are we up to the trials? What kind of fathers do we turn out to be when the chips are down, when the acid is poured on? If it hasn't happened yet, be assured: it will. Are we committed to Christ and His word? We may be pretty consistent at following Biblical patterns when we have time to deliberate on an issue. But are we disciplined in heart and mind to *automatically react* in Biblical ways? We'll only know that when the crisis happens...and then it is to late if we get it wrong.

The time we have with our children is short. The stakes are high.....we're talking about their lives. We cannot afford to muck around or be cavalier about it. The spiritual lives of our wives and children must be paramount. Are we, as fathers and husbands, ensuring they are getting spiritually fed and challenged and shepherded to maturity? The local church is only supposed to be supplementary to *our primary* responsibility in this area.....just as we, and not the schools, are primarily responsible for their education. Yes, these things take priority over the footy, the stock cars, the fishing, even the house maintenance and career. Women and children first.

Notes:

1. Titanic Historical Soc. Inc., <http://www.titanic1.org/>, 7 March 2002.
2. <http://www.cfdevotionals.org/devpg99/de990114>, 7 March 2002.
3. <http://www.churchlink.com.au/churchlink/worldscope/heroes/bateman.html>, 7 March 2002, Source: The Voice of the Martyrs, PO Box 598, Penrith NSW 2751, Australia.
4. E-newsletter from Doug Phillips and The Vision Forum, Inc., 13 Apr 2001, familyvision@visionforum.com
5. "The True Hero of the Titanic", <http://home.earthlink.net/~russgamble/testimonials.html#anchor149574>, 7 March 2002.

Home Educators Did It



Canan Barkley

of Amberley

It all started in the middle of September when I was told about Teen Missions, and I felt that God wanted me to go on a team.

I have been home schooled all my life and have really enjoyed it. At 16 years old I am not sure what I will do next year when I finish school, but God knows; and Teen Mission's main purpose is to give teenagers an opportunity to experience life on the mission field.

Anyone from thirteen up can go on a Teen Missions trip. Acceptance is on a first-in-first-served basis, but you do have to sign a number of papers in front of a J. P. to say that you will abide by their rules and regulations so that if you rebel against these they can drop you from the team and send you home at your parents' expense. I didn't find the regulations difficult; they are a safe-guard for the team when visiting other cultures. It is not only for teenagers, for they also need leaders to take the teenagers. Nearly anyone can be a leader, and you are not restricted by having children because you can take them with you.

I picked the East Malaysia team out of the seven teams because it looked like my type of thing. The East Malaysian team was going to build a hall. The first but not the last challenge was getting the money to cover the trip, but God was with me and He provided.

I left Christchurch airport on the 15th of December 2001. On arrival at Brisbane we bussed north to Tewantin and the Lord's Boot Camp, which is where we stayed for the next ten days, to be trained ready for the field.

The normal day at Boot Camp started at 5:30am with rise and shine, O.C. (obstacle course) and breakfast. Then our half-hour devotions/quiet time, followed by lessons, eg... music, laundry, servanthood, booze / drugs, will of God. Next was a class on either digging, carpentry, concrete, procedures, steel tying, trusses or blocklaying. Noon to 1:00 was lunch, then half an hour of team prayer, followed by an hour of free time or SB (special blessing) time (an SB was given to you when you were late getting some where or broke one of the rules). There was further class, this time on puppetry and music, then an hour of bath and laundry time, followed by tea and evening rally (church service); 9:30 was lights out.

On Christmas day the leaders did the O.C., and they did it backwards as wrongly as possible; it was the highlight of the day! On the 26th of December we had the commissioning service where we each had to light a

candle to represent us taking Christ's light out in to the world.

We flew to Kuching and then bussed to Pabalulu, our destination. Upon arrival we were surprised by a number of things: we were supposed to be in the middle of the jungle, so we thought that we would be living in tents and have to make a shelter to cook under, but the locals had made a cooking and eating area out of tarpaulins, had made some toilets, had put lights around our camp site, and they also let the girls sleep in the house next to our camp site. I was really challenged by the locals' generosity.

The normal day started off with rise and shine at 5:30am followed by library reading for half an hour, an hour of work, breakfast and devotions, more work, lunch and half an hour of Bible marking, more work, an hour of free or SB time, then tea followed by evening devotions and lights out at 9:30pm.

The insects and the bugs were really huge; the spiders were the size of my hand; the beetles were 3 inches long; and the ants were up to 2 inches long. We almost got the kindergarten / church / community hall we were working on completely finished. On Saturday and Sunday afternoons we went sight-seeing, once going over the boarder into Indonesia and to a beach a couple of times. We went to two church services each weekend, one in the house right beside our camp site and one in another village.

At the end of our time we headed back to Kuching for three days. The first day we split into three groups, and each group went to a school and took part in the ISCF Class that went from lunch to 6:00pm. The next day we went to a cultural village which displayed how the native people used to live.

We flew back to Australia for debrief which lasted for five days. This was to prepare us for coming back to our usual world without crashing. It was more relaxing than Boot Camp and gave us a chance to find out how the other seven teams got on. I got home on January 26 this year.

I really enjoyed the experience and would highly recommended it.

This year Teen Missions is sending out eight teams. They are going to: Malaysia to build an outreach center, Vanuatu to renovate a school, Chile to build a church, India to build a Bible school and cricket pitches to be used in evangelizing, Zambia to drive around on motor bikes evangelizing and to build orphan rescue units, Greece to renovate a youth camp, Fiji to renovate churches and Thailand to build an orphanage.

For more info contact Teen Missions at PO Box 6199, Rotorua, ph. (07) 362-8585.

Learning Disabilities



Education Recovery Mission

by David Worboys

Over the past three years I have sat through seminars with such luminaries as Dr Vicki Cassella of San Francisco State University, Professor Loretta Giorcelli of Macarthur University of Western Sydney, speakers from the NZ Coalition of Learning Difficulties and SPELD. Both the latter organizations offered videotaped speakers who are experts in the field of disabled learners. *Every* speaker devoted their time either defining the characteristics of LD/ADD or discussing "Advocacy" strategies for assisting the afflicted child to survive the harsh world of the classroom.

Not one speaker (or author that has been quoted in *Keystone*) has addressed the issue of changing the root causes of the problem for the child so as to remove, or greatly ameliorate, the difficulties experienced by the child and therefore the stress in the family of that child.

There is no doubt that parents of children afflicted with LD/ADD/ADHD need strategies with which to cope in their circumstances. There is no doubt also that there is an enormous and urgent need for "Advocacy" services on behalf of the afflicted child due to an almost total lack of understanding of these problems in the schools of this nation. As teacher trainees neither my wife nor I received the slightest hint that we might encounter such phenomena as learning disabilities in the classrooms we would eventually enter. I cried hot tears of frustration over the "Tonys" and "Belindas" who were branded for life as "5s" when at every turn I could see that these were highly intelligent children. Why could I not teach them to read when they were obviously brilliant at art, craft, music and sports? Why did they live in a continual mess when they produced the finest and most detailed drawings or paintings I have ever seen from children, learned to play classical music on complex instruments and captained interschool sports teams?

There Is an Answer

After five years of changing children's lives, much of my educational training had to be thrown out the window because my concepts of intelligence have undergone radical change.

Twelve-year-old children who were totally illiterate and either sat in a corner like Mr. Mouse, or took the classroom to pieces like Miss Whirlwind, now read at close to chronological age and are in School Certificate level classes. The student with no memory facility, told by his school that he was dumb and would never pass a driver's licensing test, learned to read in short order, gobbled curriculum as if his life depended upon it, and

gained his driver's license. The child who could never recall spelling or tables next day after blood, sweat and tears was transformed into an "A" grade student in just ten months. The student who needed prompting for every line of a play script, experienced terrible stress learning poetry or Scripture and failed Algebra repeatedly, raised her sights from Nanny to high order medical training. The twelve-year-old lad, illiterate and playing inter-provincial rugby, spent as much time on the sideline as actually playing the game, graduated from the therapy, went into the School Certificate stream at high school and was no longer suffering minor injury. I asked this boy what the difference was, and in his own words he said, "I can now think fast enough to change with the changing situation on the field so that I no longer get hurt."

What Are the Specifics of Learning Failure?

Slow Learners generally branded with *low IQ* scores fall into this category largely due to one or more of the following attributes. Change these attributes and the *IQ rises*, unless the student is a genuine IHC case, and even then there is hope of some degree of improvement. We are working with cerebral palsy (not severe cases) and seeing dramatic change. It is to be noted that Auckland schools with "cream of the crop" students complain that a surprising number exhibit puzzling slow learner difficulties.

Sensory Perception Deficiencies

Many students have perceptual handicaps in auditory or visual modes that wreak havoc on classroom performance. The signal, if it gets through at all, received from the sensory organs is different than the output from the processing areas of the brain. Some students have problems recognizing visual symbols while others cannot distinguish differences in certain sounds of speech.

Auditory Perception

Human speech is composed of 44-50 phonemes (basic units of sound). Children develop the ability to hear and discriminate the phonemes. Some children fail to process all phonemes of speech. Some sounds may be confused for similar sounds. The external ear hears the speech sounds, but the brain's processing areas never "learned" the differences. Can you imagine the confusion for the child if the teacher is writing "cat", "cot", "cut", but the child's auditory channels are processing "cat", "cat", "cat"? This student does not understand why the words are being written differently, but is too embarrassed to

question the teacher. Such students live in a world of confusion.

Visual Perception

Many students never seem to progress beyond copying shapes. They have a hard time transferring letter shapes into symbolic memory. For example, if the word "giraffe" is written on a board and a student copies the word, the student would write "giraffe" from long term visual and motor memory of the symbols. The student would not normally attempt to copy each shape of the letters on the board as I would if attempting to copy down Arabic, Greek, or Russian (Cyrillic script) letterforms. In this case, "symbolic processing" is being used to complete the task. Before a person can utilize symbolic processing, he or she must work through "visual processing" in order to learn to copy shapes or letters. Poor visual memory skills play a major role in blocking the student's ability to gain symbolic processing.

Short-Term and Long-Term Memory

A large number of students with learning problems also have deficits in sequential visual and auditory memory skills. In checking immediate, short-term and long-term memory levels, a pattern of deficits has been found among underachievers. Some students have a problem with many areas of memory and the transfer from one mode to another, e.g. from immediate recall to short-term memory, while others

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can retain all the information, but not in correct sequential order as is required for Maths, spelling and telephone numbers, or for following directions either verbal or written. Such students are a disaster in a classroom where reading and spelling are difficult because of the need to relate speech sounds to visual symbols. Completing tasks when sequential information is given, especially as related to dictation or following oral directions, is also frustrating. By the time some students have heard four spoken words, many have forgotten the first two. These children are always in trouble in school and at home; in school, they rarely remember assignments, resulting in many zeros in daily grades; at home, they are constantly punished for “not minding” their parents.

Two scenarios

(a) At home a child with low auditory memory skills is asked to take out the rubbish bag after breakfast. The child says yes, he understands the task, but two seconds after the parent spoke, the instruction is “forgotten”, and the child goes off to school without doing the task. On returning home this child is bawled out for not doing his chore “because he is lazy or rebellious.”

(b) For two hours that night they drill and practice twenty new vocabulary words for school. After a stressful time the child appears to know the vocabulary but next day cannot spell one word correctly. The teacher thinks the child is not trying, the parent is completely frustrated, and the child feels “stupid” and “dumb” and simply gives up trying to achieve.

Many students with visual processing deficits are commonly seen as “head bobbers” in the classroom. Some students can glance at a blackboard and copy entire sentences onto paper with only one look. Others have to look up after every word, or letter, because they cannot remember enough visual information after a single glance. Every time the child’s eyes move from their paper to the board and back to the paper, the chances of error increase tremendously. They constantly lose their place and write strange things on paper and end up having no idea what they have written. The same thing happens when copying across from a textbook (e.g. Maths) to an exercise book. The same student cannot read a book successfully because he or she is unable to remember any of the words by the time the third word is read, or perhaps they cannot remember what the chapter is about when it is finished. Such students find themselves having to read and reread materials to gain meaning.

Sensory Integration

Children afflicted with learning disabilities seem to have brains that are compartmentalized into separate vaults. Information being received from visual stimulation is rarely associated with auditory or tactile data. Learning to relate auditory language to symbolic language is very difficult for these students. The inability to receive auditory data and visualize it

prevents students from being able to spell and write language correctly. An interesting example of a lack of sensory integration is that of a person riding down a path with a low branch hanging across the path. The eyes see the branch, but the person hits the branch before the brain has instructed the body to duck.

A Special Word about ADD/ADHD Students

It is very probable that your ADD/ADHD student speaks at 300 km per hour. He will also hear at that speed and think at that speed. You, poor parent, only speak at 60 km per hour so that your child hears you like a 33 rpm record played at 16 rpm: horrible sound and dead boring to attend to. Check it out: ask if you are not already aware of this fact. To grab the child’s attention when they have this facility, you have to speak like a machine gun, in very short, high-speed bursts. But do not despair. The world is in need of ADD adults because of their knack of making split-second summaries of situations and acting on the data while other more ordinary mortals are wondering what on earth hit them. As one author puts it, “I’m OK, you’re ADD deficient.”

Conclusion

So what is the answer? The answer gives you hope for your child if you are willing to do more than read articles explaining strategies for helping an LD child to cope with his or her world. There is an answer called Essential Learning Systems CD-ROM software for use in the home. You will need to train to use the ELS programme, and you will need to dedicate an hour per day, four days per week for up to ten months solid. During that time, using Sensory Integration Training techniques, the ELS programme will make significant changes in the life of your child and to the advantage of the rest of the family.

The Essential Learning Systems programme works powerfully for those students who suffer the ravages of LD, ADD and ADHD. If your child is on Ritalin, we can assist you to get off that deadly poison with special food supplements that are both economic and effective.

For further information, or to discuss particular cases effecting your family, contact David Worboys at Educational Recovery Mission, PO Box 291, Dannevirke, phone (06) 374-7945, fax (06) 374-8544, email educate@xtra.co.nz

Exploring God's Creation



Life at the Extremes

by David Catchpole, B.Ag.Sc.(Hons), Ph.D.

Could anything live in a boiling mudhole? Actually, in recent years, many new species have been discovered in many places which were thought to be far too inhospitable to support life.

Not just in boiling mud, but in steaming volcanic craters, in the rocky chimneys that grow above deep-ocean volcanic vents spewing forth hot salty water ("black smokers"), in areas of extreme cold in the Antarctic, and even in the hyper-salty Dead Sea in Israel, a treasure trove of living organisms has been revealed. These "extremophiles" (Greek: *philos* = "loving") can tolerate astonishing extremes of temperature, acidity, pressure, dryness and salinity.^{1,2,3,4}

For example, *Sulfolobus solfataricus* can survive to 88°C (190°F) near fuming sulfurous volcanic vents. *Pyrococcus furiosus* ("furious fireball") tolerates 100°C (212°F). Even more amazing is *Pyrolobus fumarii*, which lives within the walls of black smokers, and which not only survives, but can actually grow at temperatures up to 113°C (235°F).⁵ *Ferroplasma acidarmanus* thrives in acid mine drainage (pH 0)⁶ in California -- a brew of sulfuric acid and high levels of arsenic, cadmium and other toxic chemicals.

Although most of these new species are only tiny microbes, the impact of their discovery has been huge, and the study of extremophiles is now virtually a whole new branch of science in its own right.⁷

- It has led to "the recent upheaval in the way we classify organisms", as scientists categorized many of the new-found single-celled organisms into "a new branch of life", the Archaea, which they elevated to the overarching rank of *domain*.^{8,9,10}
- After the initial discovery of life in the black smokers, further study of such areas revealed not only other extremophiles but new information about life in the broader ocean, in less harsh environments.¹¹
- Industry is copying aspects of the internal chemistry "survival kits" of extremophiles for use in situations where standard processes break down. E.g. the enzymes of heat-loving organisms are used in DNA fingerprinting and baking processes. Those of cold-tolerant ones are used in maturing cheese and "pasteurizing" foods while keeping them chilled to thwart the growth of undesirable bacteria. Alkali-tolerant enzymes are used to

lighten and soften the fabric of jeans, giving a "stonewashed" effect without having to use actual stones or similar particles to abrade the fabric.

- The discovery that life can exist in extreme environments has raised evolutionists' hopes that it could exist elsewhere in the universe, prompting "astrobiologists" and others to call for increased effort to be put into the search for extraterrestrial life.^{12,13}

Despite such evolutionary enthusiasm,¹⁴ extremophiles in fact raise new difficulties for evolutionists. How does one explain how organisms could have evolved to survive in such specialized extreme environments as deep-sea rock chimneys, through which superheated solution as hot as 350°C (660°F) erupts? Some evolutionists say that it was in just such circumstances that life on this planet first appeared -- in the hot, low-oxygen environment of the early oceans, bathed in the mineral-rich fluids gushing from hydrothermal vents. Thus the Archaea "pursue their peculiar lifestyles in the more extreme environments of Earth, as they may have done for perhaps 3.5 billion years."⁹ But none other than the father of modern "origin of life" experiments, Stanley Miller, pointed out that life's "building blocks" are too unstable for a hot beginning of life.¹⁵

In any case the notion of remnant life-forms from billions of years ago is not so easily applied to other extremophiles, such as those that live in the polar ice caps, in hyper-saline or acidic environments, in parched desert environments or even the super-frigid wastes of dry Antarctic valleys. And even more telling is the fact that some extremophiles are known to be able to withstand physical extremes beyond anything present in the natural environment.

Zap-proof

For example, the bacterium *Deinococcus radiodurans* ("radiation-resistant weird-ball") has been identified in cans of meat that had been sterilized (or so it was thought) with gamma radiation. While a thousand "rads" of ionizing radiation is enough to kill a person, this bacterium can survive 12 million rads!

According to the theory of evolution, an organism will possess only the attributes it needs to survive. So where did *Deinococcus* live that it had to withstand 12 million rads of gamma radiation? Natural radiation on Earth is nowhere more than a small fraction of this level. The best "answer" that evolutionists can suggest is that the bacterium evolved to withstand extreme dryness, and so radiation resistance is just a fortuitous consequence of that evolutionary process.¹⁶

For Christians who believe the Bible, the ability of life to "conquer" and inhabit extreme environments ought not to be too surprising, as the Lord intended for living things to "fill" the whole Earth (Genesis 1:28). And when we consider other examples of how God's creatures have indeed spread out to occupy the harshest environments upon the Earth, the evolutionists'

arguments break down even further.

Worms of “Fire”, Worms of “Ice”

For it is not just “primitive” single-celled organisms that live in these harsh environments, but multicellular creatures as well. For example, the “Pompeii worm” (*Alvinella pompejana*) lives in papery tubes that it builds on the sides of the black smokers mentioned earlier. The temperature inside these tubes has been measured at 85°C (185°F), and there is even a report of one worm which left its tube and curled itself around the researchers’ temperature probe, showing 105°C (221°F)!¹⁷

And another newly discovered species of worm, *Hesiocaeca methanicola*, has been found living on the seafloor in the Gulf of Mexico -- the only animal known to colonize methane hydrate “ice”. This crystalline mixture of water, methane and other hydrocarbons freezes into a solid only under high pressures and relatively low temperatures -- surely one of the most specialized environments in the world.¹⁸

The worms were observed at a depth of 700 m (2,300 ft) and 6°C (43°F), where methane hydrate is at the limit of its stability, so even a tiny increase in temperature will see the worms’ home disappear in an explosion of bubbles. Though methane ice is as hard as rock, its tendency at this temperature and depth to fizzle into gas appears to offer the worms the opportunity they need to set up a colony. By wafting its tiny pink paddle-like “feet”, a worm is able to slowly use the resulting current of water to burrow into the ice. But isn’t that a lot of effort to go to just for a home? As one researcher commented, “Why worms spurn the good life in the mud for a life on ice is a puzzle.”¹⁷

The Almost-invincible Tardigrades

But of all the organisms so far identified to be able to live in harsh environments, the toughest animals on Earth by far are the “tardigrades”. You can freeze them, boil them, dry them, starve them and even put them in a vacuum -- yet they still bounce back.

The form of these little creatures (mostly less than 1 mm [1/ 25 inch] long) has earned them the nicknames of “moss piglets”, “bear animalcules” and “water bears”. With their stumpy legs, tiny claws and slow, lumbering gait they really do look like a microscopic bear.¹⁹ Around 700 species of tardigrades have been found in habitats ranging from the freezing peaks of the Himalayas to the hottest, driest deserts, right down to the deepest ocean trenches of the Pacific.

Slow Down, Turn Off ... Revive, Survive!

How do they withstand such environmental extremes? By shutting down their metabolism during unfavourable conditions. When things become unbearably hot or cold or dry, e.g., many tardigrades curl in their head and legs and roll up into a barrel-like shape called a “tun”.²⁰ They then make the biochemical preparations for

shutting everything down -- even their respiration ceases completely. But later, when favourable circumstances return, the tardigrade uncurls itself, again extending its legs and head, and life goes on as before.

The (known) record duration for survival (in this case, without water) is 120 years, for tardigrades taken from dried-out moss kept in a museum in Italy.”

And biologists are amazed at the sort of laboratory treatment that tardigrades can endure -- often far worse than any conditions they would ever experience on Earth. For example, they have revived after having been frozen in liquid helium (-272°C, or -458°F), just a fraction above absolute zero (-273.15°C, or -459.67°F), the lowest temperature possible.^{22,23} At the other extreme, they have survived being heated to 151°C (304°F). They have survived being zapped with X-rays with an intensity 250 times stronger than that which would kill a human. Tardigrades can even survive being photographed by an electron microscope, which requires putting them in a vacuum and bombarding them with electrons.

Bearing Up Under Pressure

At least two species of tardigrades (*Macrobiotus occidentalis* [order Eutardigrada] and *Echiniscus japonicus* [Heterotardigrada]) have been shown to be able to survive extraordinarily high hydrostatic pressures, 600 MPa (6,000 atmospheres), i.e. six times greater than the pressure at the bottom of the deepest ocean on Earth.^{24,25} To put this in context, research has shown that when other animals are exposed to high pressures, their cell membranes, proteins and DNA are damaged. In most micro-organisms, growth and metabolism stops at pressures of around 30 MPa (300 atmospheres), and even among the microbes which are resilient to high pressures, most will die at 300 MPa (3,000 atmospheres). In addition, while there are organisms (other than tardigrades) that can survive very high pressures, a sudden change can be lethal to them -- a danger to which human divers must be ever alert.²⁶ But tardigrades not only can survive extended periods at 600 MPa (6,000 atmospheres!), but high-speed decompression as well.

“Over-engineered”?

As creationists have pointed out before, the ability of tardigrades to survive being subjected to such extreme laboratory treatments (radiation, cold temperature, hydrostatic pressure), far more severe than any Earth environment, poses a very clear difficulty for evolutionary theory.²⁷ As one scientific writer put it, “With such an arsenal of adaptations for survival, tardigrades appear to be over-engineered.”²¹

And, not just tardigrades -- as this latest surge of exploration and laboratory research reveals yet more extremophile microbes and other organisms able to withstand far harsher conditions than anywhere on Earth, the challenge to evolutionary theory becomes even more intractable. This is because natural selection can only select characteristics necessary for immediate

survival. Consequently, evolution cannot be expected to “overequip” creatures for a host of environments they have never faced.

For Christians, though, the “over-design” of these creatures speaks of a Designer (Romans 1:20), and it is not surprising that God also built into the living things of His creation the capacity to move out and “fill” the whole world, just as He had commanded (Genesis 1). And so indeed, we see today that living things inhabit the harshest environments from ocean to mountain-top and from pole to pole -- even at the very extremities of the Earth. Just as the Lord (Who knew, incidentally, prior to Creation, of the coming effects of the Curse and the later Flood on future environments) intended them to do.

References and Notes

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18. This also provides support for the Biblical Flood/Ice Age model -- see Silvestru, E., “Bubbles of surprise”, *TJ* 15 (2): 89-95, 2001.
19. Italian scientist Lazzaro Spallanzani named them “tardigrades” in 1776 for their ponderous walk (Lat. *tardus* = sluggish, *gradus* = walk).
20. Not all tardigrade species share the same abilities. For example, marine tardigrades do not form the tun state and cannot survive drying out.
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22. The damage to animal tissue is caused as ice crystals grow and damage cell membranes. Researchers have identified large proteins in an Arctic tardigrade that raise the freezing point of these animals compared to others. Tardigrades would therefore freeze more quickly but with lots of tiny crystals that are less likely to cause damage than larger crystals -- thus enabling these animals to survive being frozen.
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24. The Mariana trench (11° 22' N, 142° 25' E) is the world's deepest seafloor at 10,898 m (35,755 ft). Atmospheric pressure at sea level is approximately 0.1 MPa (actually 101.35 kPa, or 1 atmosphere). Under the water, pressure increases at a rate of around 10.5 MPa (103.6 atmospheres) per 1,000 m (about 3,300 ft) depth.
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Book Reviews



Understanding the Times

by Dr David Noebel

Reviewed by Andrea Munroe of North Shore City

“Every individual bases his thoughts, decisions and actions on a worldview.” -- Ollie E. Gibbs, from the introduction to *Understanding the Times*

Understanding the Times, by Dr David Noebel, President of Summit Ministries of Manitou Springs, Colorado, U.S.A., is a comprehensive analysis of the four main worldviews of the modern West: secular humanism, Marxism/Leninism, the new age movement and Biblical Christianity. While Dr Noebel gives the four equal attention, the three humanistic worldviews are proven illogical and flawed, and Christianity alone remains consistent and realistic. “We have presented these views...as accurately as possible,” writes Dr Noebel, and “...after many years of study... we believe that the Biblical Christian worldview is [in every way] far superior to all other worldviews.” His sources of information are from the ideological leaders of each worldview, quoted in context and fairly represented; “allowed to have their say as they wish to say it.”

The book is organised into ten units: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, sociology, psychology, politics, law, economics and history, with four chapters per unit for the position of each of the four worldviews. Tending slightly to wordiness, the text nevertheless reads well and flows logically, with regular references, quotes and summaries of the lives of influential modern philosophers. Rather than tracing the development of the worldviews, in *Understanding the Times* Dr Noebel examines the present situation: what is believed, why it is believed, who believes it and how they put it into practice.

It is apparent as one reads *Understanding the Times* just how much applies to New Zealand society. It becomes clear why people are acting the way they are, and that there is a gulf between a humanistic and a godly mindset. By empowering their children to recognise the humanist influence and to defend their own worldview, Christians may regain the ground lost a generation earlier -- when not only was the battlefield surrendered, but we failed to even understand that there was a war going on; a “Great Civil War of Values struggling for the hearts and minds of people, a war over ideas.”

Understanding the Times has been helpful for me particularly as I have entered tertiary-level education from a home-schooling environment

and have thus been abruptly exposed to a humanistic value-system. I can recognize the secular humanist, the new age, etc., viewpoints coming through both lecturers and resources, events and opinions, and I understand the presuppositions and the reasoning behind those viewpoints. As a course of study, the book generates excellent discussion among its students but is not just an intellectual exercise; it shows the reader the forces shaping our society and gives him the tools to combat those forces. I highly recommend it for both adults and teenagers.

Understanding the Times is available from Christian Education Services for \$55 plus postage. Contact cesbooks@intouch.co.nz or ph. (09) 410-3933.

Summit Ministries

Reviewed by Genevieve Smith of Palmerston North

This morning (24 February 2002) I attended a pre-Church breakfast and Bible study. The breakfast consisted of donuts which were really good. The study was, well, something else.

We watched a video entitled “10 Principles for Success and a Life of Inner Peace”. The speaker’s first principle was:

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“Have a mind that is open to everything and attached to nothing.”

Think about that for a moment. Does this strike you as a Christian principle? How do we know if something is a Christian principle or not? The answer is that we need to go to Scripture. We should do as the Bereans did: “they received the Word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so” (Acts 17:11).

Take a moment to apply this action to the principle quoted above. Do you see what we’ve done? Why we’ve done exactly what the principle said *not* to do! We’ve shown that we are *not* “open to everything” and that we are *not* “attached to nothing”. As Christians we are and must be “attached” to the conviction that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...” (II Tim 3:16-17).

Because this “principle” is not in union with Scripture and is in fact anti-Christian, we must disregard it.

This morning, however, the folks in the study group did not do as the Bereans did. They took this principle and other comments like it as gospel truth even though they were erroneous and contradicted Scripture.

In the face of circumstances like this I am heartened that organizations such as Summit Ministries based in Manitou Springs, Colorado, are not afraid to stand up and speak the truth and teach others how to discern between true and false teachings.

I attended a two-week camp run by Summit in 1996 and discovered that they teach people about the main worldviews held by people in the west (humanism, Marxism/Leninism and Christianity), how to distinguish them and the consequences of holding to these various beliefs. As a Christian (and in our race to become more like Christ) a course on worldviews aimed at helping you defend your faith and understand whether a certain train of thought comes from a Christian or a non-Christian worldview is invaluable.

I wish all Christians could undergo this type of training, and I would like to encourage those of you who have the opportunity to attend Summit Ministries in the USA or similar programs elsewhere – such as the World Views Conference in Auckland, 7-12 April 2002 – to make the most of those opportunities.

P.S. Not all worldviews are good... but donuts always are!

Letters



Inspiring

I was very disappointed to be out of Auckland last weekend and therefore miss the South Auckland Workshop. I was very inspired last year at the Classical Education workshop that you ran, Barbara. I have done some reading and put some principles into practice but would have loved to attend the followup workshop. Anyway, keep up the awesome and inspiring work that you do for homeschooling in this country.

Jenny Allen
Auckland

Hitting the Spot

I am really enjoying your magazine. I’ve subscribed to many homeschool publications over the years of homeschooling, but *Keystone* seems to be “hitting the spot” at the moment. Please keep up the good work! May God bless you richly always.

Rosemary Palmer
Tuakau

Outside the Norm

Just a note to thank you for your continued efforts in supporting and encouraging those who have stepped outside the “expected norm” of schooling in New Zealand. The upkeep of efforts in the mailings, visits, etc., are worthy of note and to some a wonder to behold when we consider the other demands in large Christian households. So thanks again for remaining committed and inspiring. May the Lord bless you and keep you in His tender care.

Jennifer Raikes
Hastings

Challenging

Thank you so much for continuing to send the encouraging and challenging issues of *Keystone* and *Teach* bulletin. We really appreciate them and pray that God will continue equipping and encouraging you for this important work you do.

Jant Akkerman
Wanganui

Enthusiasm

I read the Bulletin and *Keystone* with eager interest each time I receive one. Thank you very, very much for all those publications and all the enthusiasm and hard work you put into it.

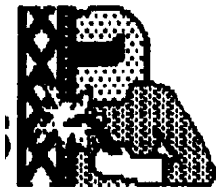
Marie-Georgette Broadbent
Te Aroha

Excellent

Thank you again for your excellent magazine! It means much to us.

Johanna Redepenning
Amberley

Strengthening Support Groups



(North) Shore Home Educators Network

by Mary Anne Abplanalp

Shore Home Educators Network aims to provide support, networking opportunities and a communication channel for North Shore families educating their children at home.

At the January 2002 Shore Home Educators support group meeting, the concept of the Shore Home Educators Network was presented and was very favourably received.

The new structure has been formulated in response to the growth of the support group and a need to provide networking opportunities for North Shore home educators.

Although support groups function better as small groups, there was reluctance by the group members to

divide the existing Shore Home Educators support group. However, under this new structure we are able to provide small support groups yet continue the contact within the wider home education community.

Families joining Shore Home Educators Network will receive details of events, activities, workshops, etc., directly via email.

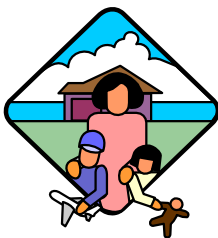
Shore Home Educators Network meetings are held bi-monthly with all welcome to attend. Small support groups meet on the months in between. A variety of support groups are available to meet individual needs of families according to ages of children, location, interests, etc.

An Administration Team is responsible for organising the bi-monthly meetings and an annual workshop. The Team also manages the network database, forwards information on to those on the email list, produces a newsletter and oversees the library.

All other activities are initiated and organised by individuals or support groups. Details of activities, classes, etc., can be shared with those on the wider network by forwarding details to the Administration Team, who will then forward this information to others in the Network.

Teaching Tips

Choosing Children's Literature



Your family should determine what **your** principles are in choosing literature. Ideally this should be done while your children are young. Also, don't be swayed by peer pressure. Just because a book is on someone's "must read" list doesn't mean your family must read it.

In our book¹ we have listed our family's principles for choosing literature. If your family's principles are broader or more narrow than ours, that's between you and God. There may be circumstances which prevail in your household which allow you to draw the line at a different place than us, and we have no criticism of you as long as you understand that the prevailing philosophy today which says, "our children should be exposed directly to everything in the world" is in direct conflict with the philosophy that says, "we should protect our children from direct exposure to those things which they are not prepared to handle."

You cannot serve these two masters. If you adopt the first philosophy, then you will try to find the most direct exposures. If you adopt the second philosophy, then you will try to prepare your children through carefully timed and controlled exposures which are themselves thoroughly exposed under the light of God's Word. Our general rules with regard to such exposures is, "better to delay than to be too early" (I Samuel 13:8, etc.; John 2:4; 7:8) and "when in doubt, leave it out" (Romans 14:23; Hebrews 11:6). In other words, these things may be useful, but they are neither indispensable nor are they unavailable later.

Young children are like soft clay -- they are very impressionable, and those impressions will harden and stay with them. What impressions do we want them to be left with throughout their life? Young children do not have the mental equipment necessary to properly handle graphic descriptions and striking images of brutalities, carnalities and perversities, regardless of our commentary. Remember, these stories were designed to leave a lasting impression upon the memory which subtly and effectively communicates a cultural philosophy. They were never innocent little stories. They are great literature, but they are not good literature, just as Richard Wagner wrote great -- absolutely brilliant -- music, but it is not good music.

(Extracted from Harvey and Laurie Bluedorn, *Homeschooling with the Trivium* #218 August 30, 2001, email loop.)

Note: 1. *Teaching the Trivium: Christian Homeschooling in a Classical Style*, by Harvey & Laurie Bluedorn; 640 pgs., US\$27.00.

Write Your Own Transcripts

Hands-on, real-life, necessary, helpful, life-skills instruction should be credited to our children with, for example, a Nanny Diploma from your home school.

Seriously. Issue it on nice paper with the scrolls, etc., around the edges. You can get really nice presentation papers at stationery stores. Have them signed and dated by both parents, one being the principle of your home education organisation, the other being the head teacher or whatever. Get someone who can do nice calligraphy to help the final result look really official.

Each child could, over time, earn a whole series of such certificates issued by mum and dad showing competence in washing dishes (kitchen hygiene), meal preparation (food hygiene & preparation), budgeting and menu organisation, balancing the family cheque book, etc. These are all incredibly important life skills....why not issue certificates for them? Because each certificate testifies to genuine competence at nannying siblings, setting the table, vacuuming the house, cooking a meal, etc., they should be included in the child's portfolio for when he or she applies for a place at university or a job.

Just think of what such certificates communicate about how seriously you take your home education programme?

When I was talking with Rosalie Phillips and Dave Burgon of the Ministry of Education in Wellington back in September 2001, I asked if a parent's home-made transcript of what their home educated young person had done would suffice in lieu of School Certificate, Bursary or NCEA. They said, yes it would. (Of course the final "yes", the one that really counts, is from the institution of higher learning, not someone within the MoE.) And these nannying or dishwashing certificates form part of your child's transcript, a formal (though perhaps not an official state-recognised) qualification with you as the issuing authority.



CHomes Roundup



Barbara & I had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, with all six of our children, to do some ambassadorial work for Home Educators (HEs), visit family and friends and do some serious sight-seeing in Japan, Canada, Mexico and the USA over the Christmas / New Year period of 2001/2002. When a close relative gifted us some money at Christmas 2000, we began planning a trip which ended up covering over 9,000 land miles, including 13 states in the USA.

Part of the planning was communicating with HEs over there by email. The Japanese HE I located was American Brian Covert in Osaka who had married a Japanese and writes for English language publications there. Amazingly he was also for a time the editor of the paper in my little home town of Sanger, California! Osaka was too far from our stopover point of Narita / Tokyo, which actually set us free for something more exciting.

Jedediah Smith, 3, feeds a bull buffalo in South Dakota.
Later we all chomped into genuine buffalo burgers!

A native Japanese Christian (of which there aren't many) and lecturer at a Tokyo University, Dr Takeyuki Ozawa, did a sabbatical year at Massey University here in Palmerston North and began attending our church. There he and wife Kayoko and children Naho & Mino met so many other HEs that he declared his intention to institute daily devotions and coming home from work early so as to get time with the family.....and yes, they'll look into HE as well. When we arrived at Narita airport, Take and family taught us a lot about Japanese culture and even more about generous and gracious hospitality. We were escorted all over town to see the sights, guided through the subway system, given a running commentary on the Buddhist and Shinto ceremonies we watched, taught the proper way to slurp noodles and soup and introduced to raw foods such as squid and horse meat (both very nice, I must add)! A highlight was going to church with the Ozawa family and talking with one or two other young families about HE which so far is a very small movement in Japan. They'll be receiving some copies of New Zealand's own Christian HE journal *Keystone* thanks to NZers' gifts to the Home Education Foundation.

We helped to host veteran HEs and convention speakers Bill & Diana Waring and family all over NZ back in 1999/2000 and had the pleasure of taking Diana's mum, Joyce Bell, around for part of that tour. When Mrs Bell heard we were coming over, she immediately offered

her 27-foot Rockwood motor home for us to use while in the USA! Wow! Talk about blessings being poured out from heaven! She also picked us up from Vancouver airport and housed and fed all eight of us at her home on Lake Stevens (just north of Seattle, Washington), where we saw rare American bald eagles flying around. We travelled many miles and shared not a few adventures with Mrs Bell, and we all became very fond of her....she is pretty special to us.

It took us two days to drive from Lake Stevens to Great Falls, Montana, where we had a big reunion with the Warings in the middle of a two-day HE conference! Barbara and our eldest (Genevieve, 21) and #3 (Alanson, 17) spent all of the next day fellowshipping with HEs there while Mrs Bell and I took our other children (Zach 19, Charmagne 14, Jeremiah 9 & Jedediah 3) to the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center (famous early American explorers) and to the Charlie Russell Museum (outstanding artistic recorder of Old West images). Staff and security guards in both places heard all about HE and NZ for two reasons: Our son Jedediah Smith wears the name of another early American explorer, a Bible-toting

Christian, well known in this area. And Jeremiah would strike up a long-winded conversation with anyone, especially those wearing badges and utility belts with pistols! He finally talked one policeman into slapping the handcuffs on him!

We also met a Lakota Sioux Indian Chief, Paul J. Never-Miss-A-Shot, pastor at the Lighthouse Church, who demonstrated to my satisfaction why he has his name: he spoke on cultural issues at the Lewis & Clark Center, liberally interspersing Christian testimony throughout! He'll also be receiving some copies of *Keystone* for his people.

Another full day's drive got us to the Waring home in Spearfish, South Dakota. NZ HEs Jesika and Catriona Shand from the Marlborough Sounds arrived in time for us all to hand-feed a herd of buffalo and for a typical American HE landmark: Michael Waring's Graduation from Home School (that is, finishing the state's compulsory attendance years), at which I was honoured as official guest speaker from overseas!

After driving through the night dodging dozens of live deer on the highway, we got to visit with Dr David Noebel, author of *Understanding the Times* and President of Summit Ministries near Colorado Springs. He gave us a couple of his other books and is looking forward to speaking to NZ HEs at the World Views Conference in Auckland next month (7-12 April).

When we were way out in the desert near the Mexican border, on the old Pony Express route, out there where Billy the Kid used to hang out, the Rockwood ground to a halt. The catalytic converter (smog control device) just burned out. Never did figure out why. Anyway, we were stranded there in Las Cruces, New Mexico, for the next five days. The phone book listed one church similar to ours, and the Lord used that phone call to channel much blessing and instruction our way.

Kim & Carol Watne picked us up and took us to University Presbyterian Church where we were welcomed by folks non-stop before and after the service. Pastor John Pickett not only fed our parched souls with strong, authoritative preaching, he also made sure we joined several new members at his home for lunch. People gave us keys to their cars, and we had keys to two private homes pressed into our hands so we could shower, do washing and use the computer while they were at work! The Watne's were especially generous to us in this regard and also instructed us in their simple yet effective evangelistic methods: prayer, face-to-face contact and service.

Back: Holly, Brian (Jeremiah Smith) & Pat Welch; Charmagne & Alanson Smith. **Front:** Heather & Sue Welch, Barbara & Zach Smith

University Presbyterian Church is also pro-home education! They too will be seeing some *Keystones*. In fact, Pastor John and others are investigating ways to make Christian secondary and university level education and qualifications a reality for anyone in the church. We spent a couple of days with HEs Eric & Laurel Tessier and family eating Mexican food and checking out second hand book shops!

An overnight drive got us to California in time for our first ever Thanksgiving holiday with my Mom and all of my sisters and their families, 22 of us in all: first time many of the cousins had ever seen their NZ rellies. As Christian HEs we tended to swamp them, as Christian HEs tend to do we noticed -- we had six children while their families exactly reflected the national average of 2.3 each.

Near Bakersfield, California, we met up with Jonathan Lindvall of Bold Christian Living, a well-known Christian HE in the USA who thinks and lives well outside the box as he seeks to understand and consistently apply Biblical principles of family living. We joined two other HE families visiting his home that evening and talked state and national HE issues until late. Jonathan loaded us up with taped messages of his, and they'll be reminded of NZ HEs regularly via *Keystone*.

Then we splurged and took ourselves to Knott's Berry Farm Amusement Park. Gunfights, stunt shows, stage plays, wildlife demos (Jeremiah got to hold a large live Boa constrictor), shopping and horrifying roller coasters kept us going for nine hours solid. While in the LA area we were invited by the CHEA executive (Christian Home Educators' Assn. of Calif.) to stop by the office. We spent a few hours with one of the founders, Susan Beattie, and the Executive head, Phillip Trout. We now receive the CHEA magazine and they receive *Keystone*. While there are many parallels, the political and organisational development of HE in California is very different to that in NZ. Our National HE organisations and most support groups still hold together HEs from all philosophical lines, while it is common for USA groups to have statements of faith. And the perceived commercial / financial / legal pressures on HE organisations and individual HEs from curriculum and legal interests there is something NZ has not yet experienced.

At one point we took a two-day drive up north into the California gold rush area to meet some special HEs we'd encountered on the internet. Andy & Kendra Fletcher of Modesto encouraged us with their Christian fellowship and vision

of celebrating "Reformation Day" on 31 October (the day Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenburg in 1517) rather than Halloween. Eric & Lisa Kjeldgaard of Angels Camp had a heart for fostering and adoption as well as a vision for home education. They introduced us to Mark Rushdoony of the Chalcedon Institute in Vallecito, the crowd I'd have to point to as the one whose publications got me thinking about HE in the first place. Had an hour with him and bought a stack of Chalcedon's books.

North into Oregon where we spent an evening in Portland with the Welch family: Pat & Sue plus Heather, Holly and Brian: pioneer HEs and editors of *The Teaching Home* magazine for Christian HEs! Production of TTH has taken over several rooms of their house....just like us! We just had a blast together. Over dessert at 9pm we got onto used books. They mentioned that the largest second hand bookshop west of the Mississippi was right there in Portland....and that it was open until 11pm!!! Spoons clattered against bowls as we raced out the door together. We spent so much money in the next 90 minutes, the Welches were still worrying in emails to us a month later that we would be angry at them for taking us there! No way folks....we loved it!

Stan & Pyng Dokupil are HEs on the south end of Seattle, Washington, who I met a couple years ago.

Somehow they had rounded up eight sleeping bags for us to take in the Rockwood all over the western USA, and now they loaned us their van to drive into the Canadian Rockies -- in winter -- so we could have Christmas with my sister Stacey and family (as the Rockwood had to stay behind). We had such a great time as we fellowshiped with them and several Christian families Saturday night and then attended their Chinese church, which fortunately for us had their monthly English language sermon that Sunday with an interpreter translating into Mandarin. We hope to see the Dokupils out here for a visit soon. They'll also be keeping up with HE in NZ via *Keystone*.

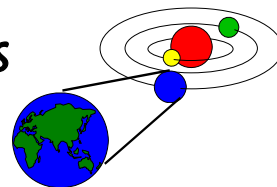
Although I'd been in contact with several Christian HEs in British Columbia, Canada, before going there, we never met up with any of them. Why? Because we spent most of our time on the slopes of Apex ski resort on some of the best packed powder snow Barbara and I had ever skied on...the air was dry, sunny and still and measured minus 15° C. That was my first time on skis in 20 years, but the skills -- and the thrills -- all came back to me like it was yesterday!

Just before Christmas we arrived at Mrs Bell's at the same time as Bill & Diana, Isaac, Michael & Melody Waring, all the way out from South Dakota! We had such a great time, these are such good friends, it took ages to say goodbye. As we actually started up the van to leave, the Warings broke into the action song of "Kia taha, kia toa". Enough to make a Kiwi homesick, even though it was sung with American accents!

We are more convinced than ever that the legal, political, social and economic environments for HE in NZ have to be among the best in the world. We would also say that the political and social factors *within* the HE movement itself here in NZ are also to be treasured. There no longer appear to be any major divisions into camps, and HEs across the religious / philosophical spectrum as well as across the curriculum spectrum appear to be communicating a lot more freely, are working together quite happily and are respectful of each other's differences. Kiwi HEs seem far less concerned about staying abreast of the state schooling system than many in the States or about gaining its (now rather questionable) qualifications. This and the very low level of competition here among resource suppliers for the dollars HEs are willing to spend keep the stress levels in NZ quite low in comparison. Long may the Lord allow these positive qualities to continue.

(Craig & Barbara Smith are founders of Christian Home Schoolers of NZ [CHomeS], founders and trustees of the Home Education Foundation and editors of *Keystone* and *TEACH Bulletin*.)

World Views in Focus



A Letter from a NZ Home Educating Mum to Her Son, January 2002, Part 2 (Final)

With this brief look at where the battle has been raging in the Western World, I have to add with shame that my generation of Christians has, on the whole, been a very poor army. We have valued worldly comfort, pleasure and popularity too highly to be prepared to suffer and bear reproach for the One Who humbled Himself, bore our sins, suffered and died for us and is now at God's right hand preparing a place for us and interceding for us. How can we explain such callousness in the face of such amazing, unflinching love? We have flirted with the enemy. We have said, "Of course you have the facts on your side. The Bible is really a book of poetry, most of which was never intended to be taken literally. Come. We love you. We will run our every-day lives on your terms. Of course mankind is progressing and it is time for our churches to reflect that too. We must mirror our culture in our messages and in our music so that the world may feel comfortable in a 'cool' church. To be seen as 'old fashioned' or 'narrowminded' would be such a stigma. We aren't Bible bashers or religious fanatics. We're here to improve your self-esteem, because of course the Christian message is all about love — nothing else. The real trouble-makers in our society are those fundamentalists who keep taking the Bible literally. If we do have to unsheathe our sword we'll use it on them. But for the most part we can simply discredit them by branding them with distasteful labels -- fundamentalists, pietists, legalists, Bible Bashers, archaic -- which is enough to intimidate most of them." In the meantime what about those of us convicted of the need to hold on to what is Biblical? We certainly did not abandon our "personal" faith, but for the most part we adopted a fortress mentality, clinging to a few like-minded friends, but isolating ourselves from the world so as to avoid being tainted by the spirit of the age. What sort of army is that? Oh yes, to our credit it must be said that we have run around busily supporting charitable organisations and missionary endeavours overseas. That generally doesn't disturb our comfort zone. But where the real battle has raged, most of us have either hidden or fraternised with the enemy. We have failed to bring hope to a despairing world.

May God graciously raise up a generation of Christians who will "be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" and bring hope to a despairing world. Without hope a civilization must crumble. Ours is crumbling. Every unBiblical worldview has wooed mankind with false hopes, and this generation is disillusioned. It is true for individuals and for society collectively that despair destroys the ability to function and soon culminates in death. "Everything that is done in this

world is done by hope,” declared Martin Luther. How right he was! Paul tells the Corinthians that both the plowman and the thresher are sustained by the hope of sharing in the harvest. In II Corinthians 3:13 he attributes his boldness of speech to his hope. The pagan world that he reached out to was characterised by cynicism and despair, “without hope and without God in the world.” (Ephesians 2:12). The apostles “turned the world upside down” by bringing to a despairing world a living hope, based on a living relationship with a living Saviour whose promises of eternal life were, and still are, immutable. In the same way the Reformation of the sixteenth century turned the western world upside down, giving the people the Word of God where they found a sure hope through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Let’s pray that the message of hope will transform this generation.

What is so uniquely transforming and invigorating about hope? We tend to use the word as a synonym for wishful thinking. By contrast, Biblical hope is a confident pursuing of what has been assured us by the One for Whom it is impossible to lie and Who does not change what He has vowed to accomplish. (Hebrews 6: 17-19). It anchors us to Christ Himself, Who died on our behalf, Whose life assures us of eternal life, whose triumph over evil assures us of triumph over the world, the flesh and the devil, Whose infinite resources guarantee us grace for every time of need and a back for every burden and Who promises never ever to leave nor forsake us no matter what. Faith is the substance, the evidence, of the things hoped for; hope eagerly anticipates the fullness of all we have in Christ.

The watchword of the 16th century Reformation was “sola Scriptura”. The Scriptures were recognized by the Reformers as the only sure foundation on which they could model their private lives, their corporate worship and the principles that governed their communities and nations. In the first century church, the Apostle Paul also drew the attention of the believers in Rome to the centrality of the Scriptures, emphasising how indispensable this was for them: “For whatever things were written before were written for your learning that you through the patience (perseverance) and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” So you see that the only source of genuine hope and comfort is the same that re-forms and transforms -- the Word of God. “Here I stand. I can do no other. May God help me!” was Luther’s defence at his trial at Worms. He became known as “The Monk Who Shook the World”, not because of his own might but because his hope gave him courage and perseverance in what the Scriptures taught. If you treasure your hope, make Luther’s words yours daily.

Hope makes us Christ-like. In John’s first epistle, chapter 3, believers are encouraged to persevere in the system of truth and life to which the world is blind, knowing that, when Christ returns, His true children will be like Him. He adds, “And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” The work of the Holy Spirit, Who takes up residence in the soul of every saved sinner, is to sanctify — to

change us progressively from the stamp of fallen, depraved humanity into Christ-likeness. He implants within us a longing to be rid of sin and to be pure. And in spite of all our faults and failings, hope keeps us in pursuit of purity. We learn that to avoid sin we have, by God’s grace, to watch our hearts. We must see that we aren’t motivated by self-centredness, jealousy, envy, arrogance, a craving for riches or for popularity, or trust in our own wisdom. We learn to take all our impurities to the foot of the cross, pleading for cleansing, for true wisdom and for all the fruits of the Spirit, encouraged by the living hope that “when He appears we shall be like Him”.

There is an aspect of preparedness in hope. Paul exhorts the believers in Thessalonica to “put on the breastplate of faith and love and, for a helmet, the hope of salvation”. The Christian is ready to do God’s bidding, to fight God’s battles without flinching, when his hope is in God’s promises.

William Gurnall, the English Puritan, gave six directions for strengthening our hope:

- 1) Study God’s word diligently
 - 2) Keep your conscience pure
 - 3) Resort to God daily and beg for a stronger hope
 - 4) Work hard at increasing your love. Love casts out fear.
 - 5) Habitually exercise your hope by meditating on God’s promises.
 - 6) Reflect on what God has done for you in the past
- May God raise up a generation of Christians who, in this way, put on the the helmet of hope. What inroads we will then see into the enemy’s territory!

As you look forward to your adult life, plead with God to make you salt and light in your generation. Make time for God’s word and prayer daily. Don’t let the world push you into it’s mould but delight to think Biblically and conduct yourself as a Christian. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might and do it cheerfully as unto Him. But never lose sight of the fact that “here we have no continuing city”. Our hope looks for one to come. We are to live in the expectation of Christ’s return, treating each day as a gift from Him. Above all, pray for the heart of a servant, so foreign to the world’s ambitious ways, but the greatest honour to the followers of Christ, the Suffering Servant. My prayer for you is that you will so live that, on the Judgement Day, Christ will say to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord.”

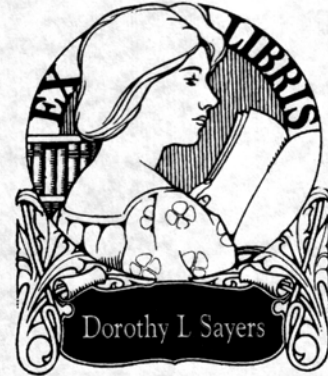
In Christ our Hope,
Your loving Mother

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by Craig S. Smith

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CHomes Roundup

Craig & Barbara Smith, founders and trustees of the Home Education Foundation and editor of *Keystone Journal* had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, with all six of our children, to do some ambassadorial work for Home Educators (HE), visit family and friends, and do some serious sight-seeing in Japan, Canada, Mexico and the USA over the Christmas / New Year period of 2001/2002. When a close relative gifted us some money at Christmas 2000, we began planning a trip which ended up covering over 9,000 land miles, including 13 states in the USA.

Part of the planning was communicating with HEs over there by email. The Japanese HE I located was American Brian Covert in Osaka who had married a Japanese and writes for English language publications there. Amazingly he was also for a time the editor of the paper in my little home town of Sanger, California! Osaka was too far from our stopover point of Narita / Tokyo, which actually set us free for something more exciting.

A native Japanese Christian (of which there aren't many) and lecturer at a Tokyo University, Dr Takeyuki Ozawa, did a sabbatical year at Massey University here in Palmerston North and began attending our church. There he and wife Kayoko and children Naho & Mino met so many other HEs that he declared his intention to institute daily devotions and coming home from work early so as to get time with the family.....and yes, they'll look into HE as well. When we arrived at Marita airport, Take and family taught us a lot about Japanese culture and even more about generous and gracious hospitality. We were escorted all over town to see the sights, guided through the subway system, given a running commentary on the Buddhist and Shinto ceremonies we watched, taught the proper way to slurp noodles and soup, and introduced to raw foods such as squid and horse meat (both very nice, I must add)! A highlight was going to church with the Ozawa family and talking with one or two other young families about HE which so far is very small movement in Japan. They'll be receiving some copies of New Zealand's own Christian HE journal *Keystone* thanks to NZers' gifts to the Home Education Foundation.

We helped to host veteran HEs and convention speakers Bill & Diana Waring and family all over NZ back in 1999/2000 and had the pleasure of taking Diana's mum, Joyce Bell, around for part of that tour. When Mrs Bell heard we were coming over she immediately offered her 27-foot Rockwood motor home for us to use while in the USA! Wow! Talk about blessings being poured out from heaven! She also picked us up from Vancouver airport and housed and fed all 8 of us at her home on Lake Stevens (just north of Seattle, Washington), where we saw rare American bald eagles flying around. We travelled many miles and shared not a few adventures with Mrs Bell, and we all became very fond of her....she is pretty special to us.

It took us two days to drive from Lake Stevens to Great Falls, Montana, where we had a big reunion with the Waring's in the middle of a two-day HE conference! Barbara and our eldest (Genevieve, 21) and #3 (Alanson, 17) spent all of the next day fellowshiping with HEs there while Mrs Bell and I took our other children (Zach 19, Charmagne 14, Jeremiah 9 & Jedediah 3) to the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center (famous early American explorers) and to the Charlie Russell Museum (outstanding artistic recorder of Old West images). Staff and security guards in both places heard all about HE

and NZ for two reasons: Jedediah Smith is the name of another early American explorer, a Bible-toting Christian, well known in this area. And Jeremiah would strike up a long-winded conversation with anyone, especially those wearing badges and utility belts with pistols! He finally talked one police man into slapping the handcuffs on him!

We also met a Lakota Sioux Indian Chief, Paul J. Never-Miss-A-Shot, pastor at the Lighthouse Church, who demonstrated to my satisfaction why he has his name: he spoke on cultural issues at the Lewis & Clark Center, liberally interspersing Christian testimony throughout! He'll also be receiving some copies of *Keystone* for his people.

Another full day's drive got us to the Waring home in Spearfish, South Dakota, where the older Smith and Waring (Isaac, Michael & Melody) offspring immediately shot through to Rapid City to see the latest Dino flick. This Black Hills region contains the huge monument of Mount Rushmore with the carved heads of four Presidents, and an even larger carving of Chief Crazy Horse. Nearby is Deadwood where Wild Bill Hickock took a bullet while holding Aces and Eights, and Little Big Horn, where Custer made his last stand against Sitting Bull and many others. We hand fed a herd of buffalo from the back of a pickup and later got to eat genuine buffalo burgers!

NZ HEs Jesika and Catriona Shand from the Marlborough Sounds arrived in time for a typical American HE landmark: Michael Waring's Graduation from Home School (that is, finishing the state's compulsory attendance years), at which I was honoured by being official guest speaker from overseas!

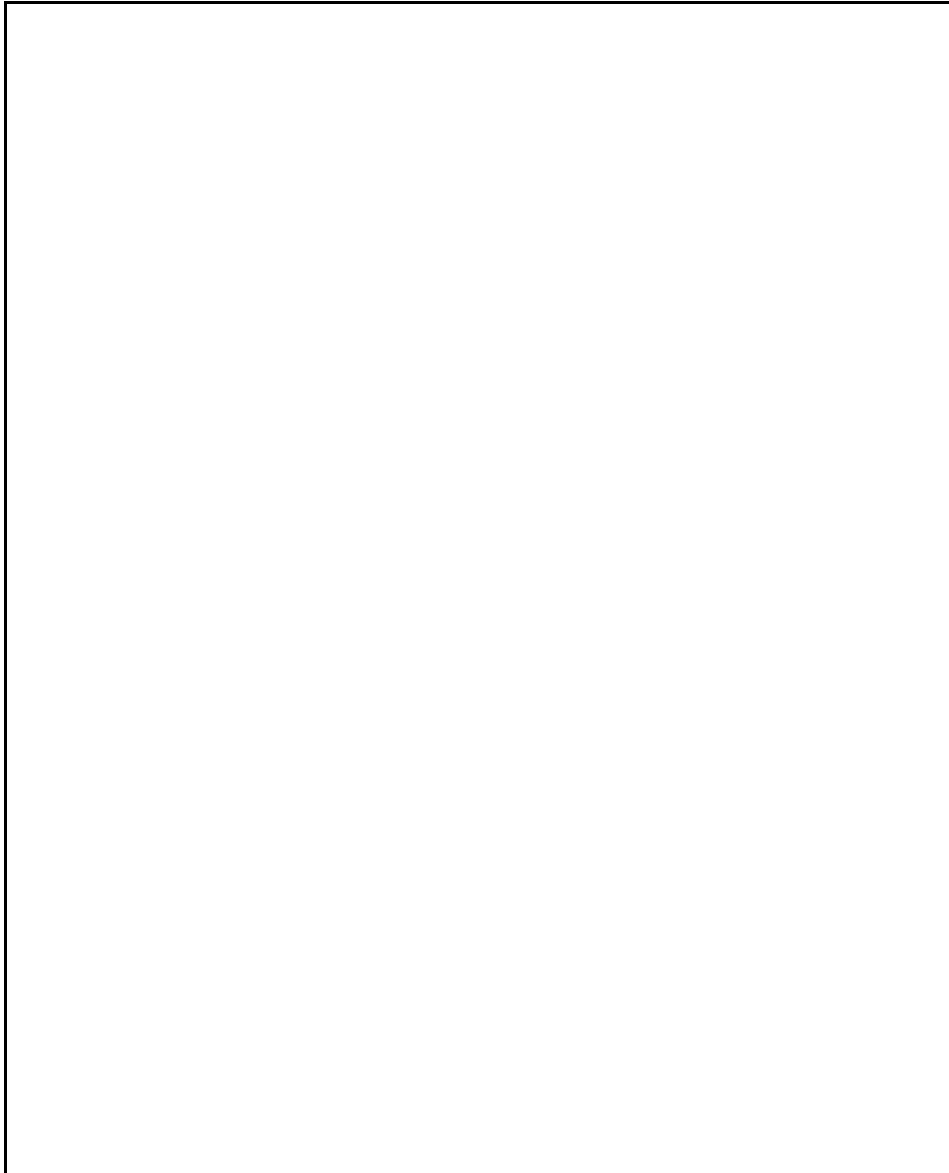
After driving through the night dodging dozens of live -- and dead -- deer on the highway, we got to visit with Dr David Noebel, author of *Understanding the Times*, and President of Summit Ministries near Colorado Springs. He gave us a couple of his other books and is looking forward to speaking to NZ HEs at the World Views Conference in Auckland next month (7-12 April).

When we were way out in the desert near the Mexican border, on the old Pony Express route, out there where Billy the Kid used to hand out, the Rockwood ground to a halt. The catalytic converter (smog control device) just burned out. Never did figure out why. Anyway, we were stranded there in Las Cruces, New Mexico, for the next five days. The phone book listed one church similar to ours, and the Lord used that phone call to channel much blessing and instruction our way.

Kim & Carol Watne picked us up and took us to University Presbyterian Church where we were welcomed by folks non-stop before and after the service. Pastor John Pickett not only fed our parched souls with strong, authoritative preaching, he also made sure we joined several new members at his home for lunch. People gave us keys to their cars and we had keys to two private homes pressed into our hands so we could shower, do washing and use the computer while they were at work! The Watne's were especially generous to us in this regard and also instructed us in their simple yet effective evangelistic methods: prayer, face-to-face contact and service.

University Presbyterian Church is also pro-home schooling! They too will be seeing some *Keystones*. In fact, Pastor John and others are investigating ways to make Christian secondary and university level education and qualifications a reality for anyone in the church. We spent a couple of days with HEs Eric & Laurel Tessier and family eating Mexican food and checking out second hand book shops!

(Extracted from *Home School Researcher*, Vol 11, No 3, 1995, p. 1-6, Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., Ed., National Home Education Research Institute, Western Baptist College, 5000 Deer Park Dr., S. E., Salem, Oregon 97301, U.S.A.)



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(Continued from page 29)

While we were in the neighbourhood, we rented a van and dashed down to El Paso, Texas, and walked over the Rio Grande into Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, on what turned out to be Revolution Day. We joined thousands of Mexicans -- from well-dressed ex-pats from north of the border to grubby Juarez slum-dwellers to country peasants in brightly-coloured costumes -- all celebrating the 1910 victory of a notorious bandito over Government forces: Poncho Villa who was himself home educated!

We did the 500 mile distance from Las Cruces to Fresno, California, three times in three different vehicles, once in an 18-hour non-stop over-night marathon and two other times making extensive detours to visit places like Tombstone, Arizona (home of Wyatt Earp, Boothill and the OK Corral), Monument Valley, Indian cliff dwellings and to marvel at the varieties and characteristics of different cactus species.

The overnight drive got us to California in time for our first ever Thanksgiving holiday with my Mom and all of my sisters and their families, 22 of us in all: first time many of the cousins had ever seen their NZ relatives. As Christian HEs we tended to swamp them, as Christian HEs tend to do we noticed -- we had six children while their families exactly reflected the national average of 2.3 each. While I married a Kiwi, my sisters also married out-of-state: Susan married Ron from Florida; Sally married Nick from American Samoa; and Stacey married Greg from British Columbia.

Near Bakersfield, California, we met up with Jonathan Lindvall of Bold Christian Living, a well-known Christian HE in the USA who thinks and lives well outside the box as he seeks to understand and consistently apply Biblical principles of family living. We joined two other HE families visiting his home that evening and talked state and national HE issues until late. Jonathan loaded us up with taped messages of his, and they'll be reminded of NZ HEs regularly via Keystone.

Then we splurged and took ourselves to Knott's Berry Farm Amusement Park. Gunfights, stunt shows, stage plays, wildlife demos (Jeremiah got to hold a large live Boa constrictor), shopping and horrifying roller coasters kept us going for nine hours solid. While in the LA area we were invited by the CHEA executive (Christian Home Educators Assn. of Calif.) to stop by the office. We spent a few hours with one of the founders, Susan Beattie, and the Executive head, Phillip Trout. We now receive the CHEA magazine and they receive Keystone. While there are many parallels, the political and logistical development of HE in California is very different to that in NZ. Our National HE organisations and most support groups still hold together HEs from all philosophical lines, while it is common for USA groups to have statements of faith. And the perceived commercial / financial / legal pressures on HE organisations and individual HEs from curriculum and legal interests there is something NZ has not yet experienced.

At one point we took a two-day drive up north into the California gold rush area to meet some special HEs we'd encountered on the internet. Andy & Kendra Fletcher of Modesto encouraged us with their Christian fellowship and vision of celebrating "Reformation Day" on 31 October (the day Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenburg in 1517) rather than Halloween. Eric & Lisa Kjeldgaard of Angels Camp had a heart for fostering and adoption as well as a vision for home education. They

introduced us to Mark Rushdoony of the Chalcedon Institute, the crowd I'd have to point to as the one whose publications got me thinking about HE in the first place. Had an hour with him and bought a stack of their books.

North into Oregon where we spent an evening in Portland with the Welch family: Pat & Sue plus Heather, Holly and Brian: pioneer HEs and editors of The Teaching Home magazine for Christian HEs! Production of TTH has taken over several rooms of their house....just like us! We just had a blast together. Over dessert at 9pm we got onto used books. They mentioned that the largest second hand bookshop west of the Mississippi was right there in Portland....and that it was open until 11pm!!! Spoons clattered against bowls as we raced out the door together. We spend so much money in the next 90 minutes, the Welches were still worrying in emails to us a month later that we would be angry at them for taking us there! No way folks....we loved it!

Stan & Pyng Dokupil are HEs on the south end of Seattle, Washington, who I met a couple years ago. Somehow they had rounded up eight sleeping bags for us to take in the Rockwood all over the western USA, and now they loaned us their van to drive into the Canadian Rockies -- in winter -- so we could have Christmas with my sister Stacey and family (as the Rockwood had to stay behind). We had such a great time as we fellowshipped with them and several Christian families Saturday night and then attended their Chinese church, which fortunately for us had their monthly English language sermon that Sunday with an interpreter translating into Mandarin. We hope to see the Dokupils out here for a visit soon. They'll also be keeping up with HE in NZ via Keystone.

Although I'd been in contact with several Christian HEs in British Columbia, Canada, before going there, we never met up with any of them. Why? Because we spent most of our time on the slopes of Apex ski resort on some of the best packed powder snow Barbara and I had ever skied on...the air was dry, sunny and still and measured minus 15° C. That was my first time on skis in 20 years, but the skills -- and the thrills -- all came back to me like it was yesterday! Just on closing time I took Barbara up the lift for her only run outside the bunny hill. Perhaps I chose a route that was a bit too challenging. Our family waited so long for us to appear out of the snow-covered forest ski trails, they finally sent a search party out to find us!

Just before Christmas, during one of our several stays with Mrs Bell at Lake Stevens, here was the entire Waring tribe out from South Dakota! We had such a great time, these are such good friends, it took ages to say goodbye. As we actually started up the van to leave, the Waring broke into the action song of "Kia taha, kia toa". Enough to make a Kiwi homesick, even though it was sung with American accents!

We are more convinced than ever that the legal, political, social and economic environments for HE in NZ have to be among the best in the world. We would also say that the political and social factors *within* the HE movement itself here in NZ are also to be treasured. There no longer appear to be any major divisions into camps, and HEs across the religious / philosophical spectrum as well as across the curriculum spectrum appear to be communicating a lot more freely, are working together quite happily, and cordially respect each other's differences. Kiwi HEs seem far less concerned about staying abreast of the state schooling system or gaining its (now rather questionable) qualifications. This and the very low level of competition among resource suppliers for the dollars HEs are willing to spend keep the stress levels quite low in comparison. Long may the Lord