

REPORT GIVEN TO STATE MISSION FELLOWSHIP - MAUGHAN CHURCH  
TUESDAY 27 APRIL 2004 BY JOAN KELLEY

WHERE DOES ONE BEGIN?

Its quite difficult to know what to say, and who to thank for what was a fantastic National Celebration.

A number of people commented about the obvious absence of any tension amongst committee members - I am sure that is because of the fantastic members of the National Committee each one of whom is very talented, and each one of whom used their talents to the utmost and because of all the time we have spent together we have all become good friends.

Way back in early 2001 we met as a defacto National Committee - we had been appointed the N.C. Elect, but did not take office until 1st June 2003. However we met fairly regularly before then.

At that first meeting in 2001 we decided when and where the Celebration would be held and whom we would invite to be the speakers.

Each member took responsibility for some facet of the Celebration, in addition to their own National Committee duties whilst other Fellowship Members were asked to form sub-committees.

For instance Margaret Pittman was asked to convene the gift bag committee. She met all the Presbytery Conveners and arranged for each one to provide gifts from their Presbytery. This meant that many hundreds of Fellowship Members throughout the State were involved in making gifts for these bags. The gifts were original, creative and absolutely superb.

The bags themselves had to be made. Edith Reddin arranged to do this, with a photograph holder sewn into the outside, into which the name of the person eventually receiving the bag would be placed. This involved another, but different number of people. Edith also arranged for each member of the N.C. to be provided with a distinctive coloured scarf.

As the gifts were made they were sent to Adelaide and were stored at Prospect Road Church, under the supervision of Joan and Les Knowling and another group of people there. It was at this church, and with the help of people from that and many other churches that the bags were packed and put into alphabetical order last Monday. These and banners and stands were brought to Lincoln College by Les in his trailer on Tuesday and taken away, again by Les on Sunday afternoon.

Lois Hoeper and Mary Thomas were asked to convene morning and afternoon teas at the Celebration. Because of new health rules this became a more onerous task than we first thought. However, they got in touch with a number of fellowships, who made and delivered home made biscuits at every morning and afternoon tea, with sufficient left over for suppers. This once again involved a different group of fellowships and members.

Back in 2001 we decided on the theme "Cloud of Witnesses" and Don Hopgood arranged for a number of logos on this theme to be produced. The one we chose was a composite of two, because we liked the eye, with a cross in the middle looking up to the clouds.

After we took office this logo has appeared on all our letterhead.

Almost immediately Margaret Knauerhase wrote a hymn "Cloud of Witnesses" which was sung at the Celebration and Service at Moonta Mines.

Betty Omond worked tirelessly in producing a data base, name tags, names for our conference folder, names for our doors at the college, Moonta Tickets and Dinner Tickets as well as the very attractive front page on our brochure. She also took bookings for the trip to Moonta and allocated parking spaces - as it turned out a very onerous task.

We had several working bees at my home when people from other fellowships joined us to check name tags etc., fill the Celebration Brochure and make table decorations, depicting clouds, for the Celebration Dinner.

People from other Churches helped to pack bags and also assisted in the registering of people as they arrived on Wednesday.

We invited each Synod Committee to sponsor either an ethnic or indigenous person to the Celebration.

South Australia sponsored two people, Jessie Iowa and Edilita Kato, from P.N.G. through National & World Mission Support. Queensland supported Viliami Mila, a young Tongan man, training for the ministry. Tasmania sent money for us to send Dolly Leatomu from Ambon and with a gift from the Highbury Street Trust, her husband, Nico was able to accompany her. NSW sent Liesl Homes, a young indigenous woman working in their Synod Office and Victoria sent money for Grace Sopar, an indigenous woman living in South Australia, to attend. Another generous donation made it possible for Denise Champion to also attend.

Rev. Judith Parkes of New Zealand, President of the South Pacific Area of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women attended as did a woman from Scotland, Past Convener of the Church of Scotland Guild and another woman from New Zealand. Every State and Territory in Australia was represented.

Ross and Athalie Ford were appointed Registrars and they have been kept amazingly busy over the months taking registrations, money, writing receipts, letters and answering a myriad of questions.

Ken Hayes was in charge of promoting the entire Celebration and he and Barbara Hayes also arranged the pre tour and post tour. They also allocated rooms at the college and have been extremely busy. These four people gave hundreds of hours chasing up checking up and finalising everything.

Ken arranged for men from the Brighton Men's Fellowship to be available to take people and their luggage to their rooms, and carry trestles, theatre cubes and banner stands up three flights of stairs - thus involving another group of people.

Mavis Ellis led the pre tour to Kangaroo Island and Ken Hayes led the post tour to the Flinders Ranges, which left early yesterday morning. Mavis tells me that the church at Kingscote was supportive, and the Fellowship at Port Elliot gave the tour morning tea and a tour of the Pt. Elliot computer centre.

The common room at the college was decorated with 15 banners, depicting men and women from the Bible as a Cloud of Witnesses. Judy Burge had arranged for these banners to be made and she stored them at her home as they arrived. We had some from nearly every Synod, including the Northern and Western Australian Synods. These banners will form the nucleus at the Banner Launch on the 11th August next.

Heather Bald added to the banner display with a superb arrangement of flowers, linked by pale blue tulle - this was to depict the church militant - us and the church triumphant - our Cloud of Witnesses - it was a very meaningful display.

Margaret Brisbane, with her husband Peter, convened a committee to meet and greet people at the airport, bus and train stations and take them back there afterwards. They had many frustrations, particularly with people giving the time they were leaving their destination as the time they were arriving.

Peter was also official photographer with the further frustration of his camera being inadvertently taken to Perth where it still remains.

Colin Styles, our Minute Secretary, together with Linda Vinall took us through the Risk Management Procedure. This took a good deal of time and was quite expensive and time consuming. Colin was appointed Safety Officer for the Celebration, and thanks to him and his care in being so pro active, it was wonderful, in that very old building, with stairs and many hidden traps that there were no accidents.

We asked Rev. Gowan Armstrong to arrange the Aboriginal Welcome. A Kurna Lady who teaches the Kurna Language brought a greeting in Kurna, Stephen Goldsmith, gave us a didjeridoo solo, Denise Champion, read verses of scripture and Nelson Varcoe, field worker for TACL, accompanied himself on his guitar and sang solos, duets and led a sing-a-long. This great welcome to the land of the Kurna people got the Celebration off to a superb start.

Mrs. Dorothy Hunter, who was really responsible for the first National Committee being formed officially opened the Celebration during dinner that first night when she gave us a history as to how the N.C. was formed and showed early photos. However, in the afternoon, with Edith Reddin she walked all around the college, putting the correct name plates on bedroom doors - a very big task in that rabbit warren at the college.

Norah Norris conducted a getting to know you with a segment entitled two by two - it was very successful in mixing us all up and some amazing co-incidences were discovered.

Each morning after a time of hymn singing, our Chaplain Rev. Grant Dunning conducted very meaningful devotions giving a pen portrait of a number of Cloud of Witnesses - such as John Flynn, George Brown and Rosalie McCutcheon.

The worship area was decorated to illustrate as a visual the story of each of these witnesses.

Rev. Andrew Dutney conducted Bible Studies and Janet Wood was our Keynote Speaker, on the theme Cloud of Witnesses.

These two people enthralled us and excited us with what they had to say. They not only challenged and confronted us, but they informed us and fed us. Janet's talks and Andrew's Bible Studies will be available soon and we intend to put them on our website. - a reminder [www.ucaf.org](http://www.ucaf.org).

Don Hopgood arranged electives on many topics, one very popular one of which was a walk around North Adelaide, conducted twice by Mavis Ellis and another about making banners by Geraldine Drummond and Peter Brisbane on making cards from photographs and 'Who wants to go to Mars?' by Don Hopgood.

A highlight was the inclusion of "conversations" with Special Guests, also arranged by Grant, when the people from Ambon, P.N.G. and our Indigenous Guests were able to tell their stories in a relaxed atmosphere

The Celebration Dinner was a great success when a number of non registered people joined us for a formal dinner and forum at which Stu Cameron, Jan Trengrove, Dean Drayton, Assembly President, and Terence Corkin, Assembly General Secretary spoke and answered questions. The decorations were just lovely, with Heather Bald decorating the top table and Judy and Lois decorating the other tables with blue clouds which they had made.

Friday 23rd was an amazing day. We had arranged for 6 buses to go from North Adelaide and Brighton to Moonta and Moonta Mines, and other churches and fellowships did the same. But there were so many others who went by private car or bus.

After morning tea at either Kulpara or Port Wakefield 1,200 people filled the church at Moonta Mines in a Service of Worship at which Assembly President, Rev. Dr. Dean Drayton was the preacher. There was a choir of 70 and it was an almost overwhelming experience as we sang "Oh for a thousand tongues to sing" with over 1,00 people actually singing it.

The people at Moonta and Moonta Mines did an amazing job in serving over 728 people with hot Cornish pasties so quickly and efficiently (there were 12 pasties over - a significant number), as well as fruit salad and ice cream and tea/coffee and slice.

The tours to the Cemetery, Miner's Cottage and Museum were very popular and to our Safety Officer's delight, no one was left behind.

That evening Lyn Leane and Sandy Boyce presented "Our Church in Mission" segment when they were able to inform everyone about how our church is co-operating with our partner churches. We were challenged to make sure we get those young people who have returned from life changing experiences in churches in these countries to tell their stories. We should remember this when planning programmes for our fellowships

The Celebration Concert, compared by Don was a lot of fun with each Synod giving an item. The S.A. Synod excelled itself with members dressed as fairies, prickles, a wicked witch and a handsome prince.

And finally our last day. Grant prepared the Order of Service for both the Moonta Mines service and the final Communion Service.

At the Communion Service the common room was transformed - into a very beautiful Worship Centre and an area illustrating Anzac Day was memorable.

Grant conducted the service, Andrew preached, Rev. Ted Bray recited the Ode and each member of the N.C. took some part. Don played his trumpet for Last Post and Reveille and he and Ross accompanied all the singing on their trumpets, both at Moonta Mines and at Lincoln College.

We concluded the Celebration by forming a ring around all the tables in the dining room, holding hands and singing a vesper 'Father bless us as we go" together.

All those on the N.C. have been run off their feet for the past few weeks and for the whole time at the celebration. We are delighted that Barbara Hayes has videoed the entire Celebration and we look forward to seeing excerpts during the next few weeks.

It is a committee of very talented and dedicated people. It is a committee of which I am extremely proud.

I thank god for giving me this wonderful opportunity of leading and serving.