



ASSEMBLIES
Outreach

December 2012

A SAVIOUR HAS BEEN BORN TO YOU;
HE IS CHRIST THE LORD.

Luke 2:11



In this issue:

News from Home Workers
Praying for NSW Assemblies
Celebrate Christmas?
Nicodemus (a pen portrait in John)
CBCS 2012 Annual Report (pullout)
(and more ...)

The NSWAEM publishes this bi-monthly magazine to offer opportunities for NSW Home Workers, Assemblies, Para-Assembly Activities and other kindred bodies, to share information about their ministries, to encourage others, and to foster prayer.

You are free to make use of the information in this publication and to reproduce it for your personal use or for the church you attend. Material must not be sold or republished for commercial purposes unless you obtain written permission first.

If material from this publication is used or quoted in any other publication (including web sites) due acknowledgment should be made. Please contact the Editor (refer p27) with any inquiries about reproducing this material.

Contributions to *Assemblies Outreach* magazine are welcome and actively sought from NSW Assemblies and associated ministries and individuals.

Please submit your assembly news, people profiles, letters, etc, for the **February 2013 issue before:- 18th January 2013**

Contributors enjoy reasonable liberty in their expression of opinion and exposition of Scripture within the boundaries of a biblical evangelical Christian faith. Neither the Editorial Team, the Board of NSW Assemblies Evangelistic Mission, nor Home Workers are to be held responsible for every view that may be expressed.

Editorial & Production Team:

Mr C. Winrow, Mr G. Hayden,
Mrs. M. Winrow.

Subscription costs for 2013 are shown at:-
www.cb-nsw.org.au/aem/Mag/subs.html

Printed by Dominion Colanco Print Group.
PO Box 6999, Silverwater NSW 2128
Phone: 02 9648 2888

STEWARDS FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN BRETHREN

A Corporation Constituted in NSW by the Stewards' Foundation of Christian Brethren Act 1989

Consider "*Working Together*" with Stewards
when your church has financial needs:

Constituted to support the Christian Brethren Movement, the Foundation:

- Provides loan finance for new projects, extensions, vehicles, office equipment.
- Accepts funds on deposit at competitive interest rates.
- Arranges Insurance.
- Funds Christian Schools.
- Acts as trustees of Assembly property
- Administers gifts, bequests, endowment funds.
- Owns, operates and funds Christian Retirement Villages.
- Offers membership to people who attend Christian Brethren Churches.



*Assisting Christian Brethren Churches and related Organisations,
Brethren Missionaries and Brethren Workers both practically and financially,*

AUSTRALIA WIDE

PO Box 230, South Hurstville NSW 2221

P: 02 9547 3110 F: 02 9547 3116

M: 0419 747 227

admin@stewardsfoundation.com.au

www.stewardsfoundation.com.au





Dear Readers,

Welcome to the final issue of the magazine for 2012. I hope it reaches you in time to be part of your Christmas holiday reading.

The editorial team is again most thankful to all the people who contributed to this issue and at various times during the year and we hope the information proves helpful and interesting to all our readers. Please write and let us know what you think and what you would like to see in future issues, if the Lord tarries.

In Cairns at around 6.38am on 14th November this year many people got a really good view of the sun being totally eclipsed by the moon. Thousands of people had travelled from all around the world to see the event and locals got to see it while sitting on the front verandah eating breakfast! I saw an email from one such person who felt very privileged to see this amazing sight.

She reported that in the hours that followed, the local TV station asked people about their experience – what



they saw and how they felt. There was plenty of talk of sun and moon gods, stars aligning, crystals and cosmic energy, but (as far as she could tell) no mention of God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

While we can be disappointed by that, I guess we should not be surprised. We now live in a society that marginalises and even disregards God. Even those of us who are Christians can sometimes get too busy (especially in the weeks before Christmas Day) or too focused on the day-to-day routine to acknowledge God or His amazing handiwork around us.

So this week, this month, and all of 2013 let's make an effort to stop, look up, and around, to see and appreciate God's handiwork; in nature for sure, but also in ordinary, everyday (perhaps difficult!) people. □

CONTENTS of this Issue:

'Out and About' in NSW.....	4
News from Home Workers.....	6
Praying for NSW Assemblies.....	9
"Dare to be a Daniel" camp	11
Celebrate Christmas?	12
NSW Ministry Support Fund...13	
Riverstone 25 th Anniversary	14

CBCS–2012 Report ... (a pull-out)	
Nicodemus (a pen portrait)	15
2013 Calendars advert	19
Almsgiving for Aged Living	20
Awesome, Pop!.....	22
Internet Corner	25
Recall Notice	26

'Out and About' in NSW Assemblies

compiled by Colin Winrow

If you attend a NSW assembly, or you work with any associated Christian Brethren ministry, please feel free to submit your local news or event dates to this 'Out and About' section so we can inform and encourage people in NSW Assemblies. Short items (even if only one sentence) are welcome and can be mailed to the Mission office at PO Box 640, Burwood, NSW 1805, or faxed to 9715 5528 or, best of all, e-mailed to:

outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au

Also, please email your wording for **Notices** or **Coming Events** to be included on the NSW Christian Brethren web site:-

webadmin@cb-nsw.org.au

The past financial year (2011/12) for Christian Brethren Community Services (CBCS) has been a significant one in terms of growth and development of its ministry. The most significant of these milestones has been the finalisation of the transfer of the prime aged care assets of the Steward's Foundation to the ownership of CBCS. This is reflected in its enhanced advertisement on the magazine's back cover, and is described in more detail in the CBCS Annual Report which is included as a "pull-out" in this issue.

Rob Lamont (Ministryblue.com) mentioned, in his news email dated 16th November, a new church plant. He wrote "I am about to plant a morning and an evening church in the Rousehill, Stanhope Gardens, Kellyville Area. Are you interested in being involved."

If you are, please phone Rob on 0416 118 813 or email him at :-

rob@ministryblue.com

Some readers may know of Dr Neil Summerton who is Secretary of the IBCM International Planning Group, and based in Devon in the UK. He has written to inform all Brethren magazines in the world that his email address has changed to:-

neil.summerton@btinternet.com

At the same time, he wanted to inform us of details of the sixth International Brethren History Conference, which is to be held on 15 - 17 July 2013 in the UK. It is organised by the Brethren Archivists and Historians Network (BAHN) and has the theme "Brethren Thought in Historical Perspective".

A brochure is available giving more details, the draft programme, and a booking form. It can be downloaded from:

www.brethrenhistory.com

There will be several keynote addresses, and in addition there'll be an opportunity for those attending to present short papers up to 30 minutes in length at breakout sessions or, for those unable to attend, to submit papers and have them read in their absence. It is hoped that a selection of papers from the conference will be published. If you are unable to attend but would like to submit a paper, please send in the booking form with your contact details, ticking the box for "writing guidelines" only.

The last meeting of the NSW Coordinating Conference was held on Thursday evening, 1st November. The Secretary, Brad Scott, sent out the Minutes by email on 20th November. These contain notes about the aim and content of the Word of Life (WOL) events listed below, and about the Evangelism Seminars in mid-February at which Dr Martin Robinson and Paul Griffiths will be the speakers.

Brad has also been involved with SRE Accreditation Training at many places in NSW to help ensure we as a church network conform to the latest requirements for SRE in the public schools. It's become apparent some of our churches are doing this without having Green Cards which is illegal. The Green Card lasts for 3 years and then needs to be renewed.

The DET asks us to sign an official document each year ensuring that all our SRE teachers meet their minimum standards which include, Child Protection, Working with Children checks and teaching from an approved curriculum. Please contact Brad if you have questions about this.

Meetings & Events

(note: for the latest details please be sure to check at:-

www.cb-nsw.org.au/events.html

2013:

- 13 Feb **Evangelism Seminar** in Sydney; 7pm to 9pm.
- 14 Feb **Evangelism Seminar** in Newcastle; 7pm to 9pm.

- 23 Feb **Youth Leadership Development** Conference (spkr from WOL).
- 25 Feb **Q&A**, Mike Calhoun (WOL) with CCCAust Youth Leaders at Kings Park Community Church.
- 14,15 Mar National CCCAust **Pastors Forum** in Victoria.
- 22,23 Mar NSW **Men's Conference** at Camp Toukley. Topic is "1 John".
- 6 Apr Riverstone Assembly 25th **Anniversary Dinner**.
- 14, 15 Jun NSW **Strength In Unity** (SIU) Conference at Camp Toukley. Topic is "Church 2013".
- 22 June **Women's Mission Convention** at Riverstone Community Church.
- 15-17 July 6th **International Brethren History Conference**, to be held at Pilgrim Hall, East Sussex, UK.
- 16 Nov **"Gym Jam" Youth Event** (in partnership with Word of Life) at Riverstone Community Church.

2014:

- 20-22 Jun CCCAust **National Conference**. The theme is "Worship". The host city is Sydney. 

PLEASE submit all items for the next issue of this Listing BEFORE 18th Jan 2013

News from some NSW Home Workers



Peter Clines
6th November 2012



To the Editor,
Outreach Magazine.

Dear Colin,

I write to advise my new contact details. Following the death of my dear mother last year, our family home of 70 years has been sold, and I have now returned to live in my home-unit just up the road.

My new address:

7/15 Rosa St, Oatley, NSW 2223

My telephone number: 9570 1148
(unchanged)

My email address: pclines@bigpond.com
(unchanged)

Whilst I was caring for my mother over the years of her long depressive illness, I found it necessary to restrict somewhat my Bible teaching and preaching in the assemblies, the work to which I was originally commended over 20 years ago.

If the Lord wills, it is now my desire to engage in that work more fully once again, as opportunity arises.

Christian regards,
Peter.

Daya & Mary Nand
6th November 2012



As we approach the end of another year we are thankful to the Lord for various opportunities of sharing the precious and powerful Word of God.

Generally it has been at Assemblies, where the saints have been encouraged and blessed.

On a couple of occasions it has been at funerals. At one of them recently a family contacted the Concord Assembly regarding the death of a family member who used to attend the meetings there a long time ago and had taken his children with him. Thankfully he was a believer and I had the joy of sharing the Gospel at the funeral service. There was a mixed audience including a Roman Catholic priest who was a family friend. He appreciated the Christian message.

This family now are all adults and remembered the Sunday school and meetings and we are praying for them to come back.

Facebook, the internet and the phone have been other ways of helping people to know the glorious Gospel of the Lord as I have responded to messages of those sharing their needs. Through these means I have been spreading the Word to Fiji, New Zealand and the USA and of course here in Australia. These are indeed 'open doors'.

We have valued the fellowship and prayers of the Lord's people as we have continued in His service and are so thankful. We have had our health problems but continue with His grace and blessing.

We do pray that this Christmas season will see more lives blessed as we preach the good news of our Lord. God bless. ➤

Andrew & Janice Collins
(extracts from "Prayer Update")

It is December 1st - so perhaps this Update is as early as our last one was late. On Monday I (Janice) leave for travels to Asia and then will return December 14th needing to run into Christmas.

We feel spent after a year with many challenges, but eager to rest and enter the new year with all its opportunities. Your prayers for us will let us face the new year with thankfulness that because of the power of God made known to us through His son Jesus, we will not be crushed or destroyed. (2 Corinthians 4: 7-9)

Our December Prayer Update has some 'Stories of Hope' to bless you. Christmas means additional needs for many. The ministries of International Teams face some particular needs this Christmas. I invite you to read our Christmas Giving brochure and consider a gift for the poor and oppressed whom we serve.



Family News:

We are delighted to share this photo of ALL our family together for the first time along with Great-Grandma as we

gathered with Flora's family to celebrate Immi's first birthday on November 29. Christmas will give us more opportunities to get together!

Please Pray:

December 3-14:

Jan's leadership meetings in Manila, then visit to projects in Phnom Penh and Thailand.

December 14 -15:

Andrew training a short-term mission team.

January 28 – February 9

Refreshing holidays (yay!)

February 24-28, Adelaide:

Janice – sharing Stories of Hope.

Andrew – Missions Interlink National Meetings.

We are most thankful for God's continued blessings on us all. Thank you for your prayers and support of us during 2012. Please continue in 2013.

May your Christmas season be blessed with thankfulness for the love of God shown though Jesus His Son.

Loving greetings,

Andrew and Janice

Geoff & Liz Folland

21st November

G'day,

Summer! The university semester has ended, we've farewelled graduates and launched scores of students into summer projects. Yesterday I heard reports of midnight conversations at fast food joints and talked with Renee as she juggled a mix up with the bank which meant our project leaders couldn't access the funds to pay for project expenses!

>8



The mundane amidst the sublime! Our team, partnering with local churches on the Gold Coast, have been meeting with schoolies for several days. The teams at Lorne and Philip Island Victoria are beginning today. The team at Byron Bay on NSW North Coast is launching on the weekend. Mobilising 160 students to multiple locations around the country has been a monumental task, but I look forward to sharing with you the exciting stories of what God does through them.

(Stop Press: In a text message just through, four Schoolies prayed to receive Christ last night - all led to Christ by first time project attendees or first year university students!)

Yesterday, I spent the whole day on a panel interviewing candidates for the school chaplain position at Epping Boys High School. Epping Boys sends many students to Macquarie Uni. Schools chaplaincy is a growing part of Campus Crusade's ministry. We are developing strong chaplaincy networks in western Sydney, which should significantly help our campus ministry.

Last week I spent a day in Melbourne at Campus Crusade's National Leadership Team, and two days in Katoomba facilitating the final SHIFT retreat for

the year. The retreat was a great experience as we reflected on Jesus selecting the Twelve from among His followers and appointing them to leadership roles which would expand His movement. Similarly, we are commissioned to make disciples of all nations but we are not told to make leaders. We are told to select and appoint leaders.

Personally:

In addition to the travel, last week was significant as we celebrated Philip and Liz's birthdays. The festivities seemed to carry on for most of the week!

30th November

Schoolies Update:

"We saw three more people become Christians in recent days. John, Troy, Nathan and Eric were involved."

Schoolies Update: "Three more new sisters in Christ last night! Our prayer team were asking for girls to respond, and they did."

Schoolies Update: "Another new sister in Christ last night, introduced to Him through Eric and Shei."

As you can see, with so many students seeking to share the gospel amidst a crowd of thousands of young people we find that God has prepared the hearts of people to respond. We should never believe the lie that people don't want to hear the gospel.

Please pray for the safety and diligent service for our summer project teams.

Thanks for your prayer and partnership in this ministry. We couldn't do it without you.

In His love and grace,
Geoff



Prayer & Praise Requests from NSW Assemblies

compiled by Brad Scott for
November & December

General Points:

- ☆ Pray for our Church leaders that they will be open to the Spirit's leading as they lead our churches.
- ☆ Pray for Lutanda staff who will be hosting a number of Children's Camps over the School Holidays. Pray for the Study leaders and the kids who attend that there may be many hearts touched for Christ.
- ☆ Pray for all our churches as we, as a network present the wonderful truth about Jesus' birth to our communities. Pray for opportunities and that the Holy Spirit will convict our friends and neighbours about their relationship with God.
- ☆ Pray for Richard and Anne Holt who are serving in Chad. Chad is presently devastated with floods. If anyone would like to give to the work in Chad at this difficult time, please contact AMT who have a fund established for this purpose.
- ☆ Pray for John & Erica Watts who plan to serve our Lord in Japan. They plan to leave West Pennant Hills in February next year to serve with OMF. They would love to come and share with your local church the Vision God has laid on their hearts. If you would like to hear what God is doing in their lives you can contact them at john.c.watts@gmail.com

- ☆ Pray for Graham Whittaker, (Tambourine Bay Gospel Chapel) who has just returned home from hospital after having two stents inserted in his heart. Please support him in your prayers as he recovers.
- ☆ Remember to uphold Stephen McQuoid and David Smith (who will be speaking at next year's Men's Conference) as they prepare to share from the book of 1 John. Pray that our hearts will be ready to hear and act on the word of God.

New Heights Christian Church:

Pray for:

- ☆ City Fest - The church is actively involved in the City-wide Luis Palau Evangelism Crusade.
- ☆ The church fete – that they'll meet and build new friendships within their community.
- ☆ the leadership as they interview candidates for the Youth Pastor's role.

Praise God for:

- ☆ the unity within the church as they work together for the common good.
- ☆ the corporate desire in the church to be reaching out to the community.

Narara Gospel Church:

- ☆ Pray for the leaders as they consider the future of the church.

➤10

- ☆ Praise God for the faithful service of the current church family.

North Parramatta Gospel Chapel:

Pray for:

- ☆ Blessed people to serve in the church.
- ☆ Gifted people to serve in the community.

Praise God for:

- ☆ hearts opening and growing in Christ from the teaching in the church.

North Ryde Christian Church:

Pray for:

- ☆ the Carols in the Park held alongside our hall on the evening of Tuesday, 18th December, including: distribution of flyers to letterboxes, notices in newspapers, free sausage sizzle, Gideon New Testaments, Christmas carol singing and gospel message.

This is the time of the year when people are willing to listen to the Christian message in word and song.

- ☆ the Youth Group "Unite" which was re-launched recently after a gap of several years. Pray that Year 6 Kids Club ("Big Maks") students will return to "Unite" in 2013. Pray that in time Unite will provide leaders for our annual Camps for Primary and High School students.

Praise God for:

- ☆ the new members who have helped to rebuild our congregation and are beginning to serve in our ministries.
- ☆ the way new people are accessing our website and then visiting us.

www.northrydechurch.org



**WOMEN'S MISSIONARY
PRAYER GROUP**

Meetings in first half of 2013

Burwood Gospel Chapel

(rear hall) 10.30 am – 1 pm,
on the second Friday of each month:–

8 February 8 March 12 April
10 May 14 June

All women are invited to be part of this important ministry.

Tea and coffee provided, BYO lunch.

Enquiries:

Lillian Fleming 9858 5436 or Freda McKeown 9661 6001

'Dare to Be a Daniel' youth camp at Yarramundi

based on a Press Release
by the Billy Graham
Evangelistic Association



The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's (BGEA) first, five-day 'Dare to Be a Daniel' camp in Australia, held recently at Lutanda's Camp Site at Yarramundi, was attended by sixty young Australians aged nine to thirteen. They had come to learn how to 'Dare to Be a Daniel', a reference to Daniel in the Old Testament who stood up for his faith, despite being in exile in a foreign land. Chad Miller, Director, Children's and Youth Evangelism Training for BGEA International, visited Australia to attend the camp.

"We witnessed a mighty move of God on the last evening as nearly everyone stood and committed to following Jesus, even when times are difficult, so that they might win their friends and family to Him. It was not an easy invitation," Chad said.

Chad went on to say, "Pray for a groundswell of evangelistic enthusiasm and that these young people might be strong and boldly speak about Jesus to their generation."

Rodney Trinidad, BGEA Australia's Youth and Schools Relationship Manager, ran the camp with the help of trained volunteers and Lutanda

Yarramundi camp staff. "Who better than youth to reach their friends with the Gospel of Jesus? That's what the 'Dare to Be a Daniel' camp is all about," Rodney said.

"Our goal was to equip youth, who already know Christ, with the tools they need to stand strong as young Christians and to effectively share their faith with their friends," he said.

"I will never forget Jiordi, a 12 year old student standing up and saying: 'For a long time, I have been bullied at school and it's been really hard on me. I met new friends at camp who will stand with me by praying for me. I have also learned that, like Daniel, I can be a fearless Christian, knowing that God is always on my side,'" Rodney said.

"Our vision is for the 'Dare to Be a Daniel' experience to spread throughout Australia in partnership between the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and the local churches. It is critically important that we equip this nation's young people for Christ as they approach their teenage years in an increasingly secularised society," said Jorge Rodrigues, Executive Director of BGEA Australia.

For more information – contact:

Rodney Trinidad: 1300 799 727
rodneyt@bgea.org.au

[Rodney told me later:

"About 80% of the youth and leaders at the camp were from Brethren assemblies. My network is mainly based with Brethren youth." —Editor]



Should Christians celebrate Christmas?

by Daya Nand

My personal response to this question is that of a hearty YES! My reason is that it is a great annual and public remembrance of this world's most important event of mankind when the Mighty Creator became a perfect human-being for the first time.

He did appear several times in the Old Testament – these are called Theophanies or Christophanies. But this time “veiled in flesh, the Godhead see; Hail the Incarnate Deity!” My heart jumps with joy for “the Desire of the nations has come.” Surely we should rejoice with the angelic host in praising God for His unspeakable (inexpressible, inestimable, indescribable, incomparable, beyond words) Gift! Even if it is difficult to properly translate this Gift!

BUT... BUT...BUT, some might say:–

1. *Christmas is not a command to observe.* But do we really need to be commanded? Cannot we respond with appreciation from our hearts and with jubilation? Remember when Queen Esther saved the Jewish massacre as recorded in the historical Book, where God is not even mentioned, and how that particular day was celebrated and became an annual Festival. There was NO instruction from God for observing that day. But the amazing truth is that our Lord Jesus joined the nation of Israel in celebrating it!!

Then, there is the clear instruction that we are “not to judge in respect to an holy day” or, as translated by the TCNT*, “in the matter of annual or monthly or weekly

festivals” (Colossians 2:16). Furthermore it is strongly taught in Romans 14:4 onwards that “he regardeth the day unto the Lord” and that “every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” While the subject in that verse may be the Sabbath, the principle does apply in a broader sense.

or 2. *The original “Christmas” was actually a pagan festival.* So in effect we are to consider a proper “Replacement Theology!” Praise God for the mighty transformation. People were delivered from SUN worship to SON worship! This is evidence of true conversion. Funnily enough this pagan belief is propagated by well-meaning Christians who are writing articles on those false gods! It is very wrong to accuse Christians of following pagan practices where the Lord Jesus is being exalted as the Saviour of the world. Celebrations with Father Christmas, Christmas trees, giving of gifts and feasting all have new applications.

or 3. *It is too commercialized!* Certainly it is. But the glorious Gospel of our Lord is blazed abroad. Read the messages on Christmas Cards. See the pictures depicting the wonderful birth of our Lord. The Gospel narratives are being read by millions throughout the world in many languages. Christmas carols in parks and in churches, Christmas Plays etc clearly herald the true Christmas message of the Saviour who is Christ the Lord. His virgin birth; His true humanity and deity; the purpose of His birth to be the Saviour; the fulfilment of prophecies supporting the inspiration of Holy Scripture; and His ➤

return, are some of the precious truths being proclaimed. Let us then rejoice with the apostle Paul that the Gospel is being preached irrespective of the motives of people; Philippians 1:18.

Praise the Lord for the opportunities presented to the Church Universal at this Christmas season to proclaim the "REASON for this season". Modern technology will be advancing the glorious message worldwide.

Christmas means so much to those in hospitals, to the poor and needy, to children in various circumstances, to the lonely, to the Armed Forces, all places where Christians are actively involved to bring love and cheer with

their gifts. There is no doubt that the spirit of giving and reaching out in compassion is an outflow from the Greatest Giver Himself. Truly there is "joy to the world, the Lord has come."

May my simple article deliver some people from uncertainty and negativity to join with the many who celebrate Christmas with great joy and thankfulness for the Saviour who is Christ the Lord.

Please feel free to copy and distribute this article and to contact the writer, Mr Daya Nand, by email: daya.mary.nand@hotmail.com.

* Editor's Note: "TCNT" is an abbreviation for "The Twentieth Century New Testament".



NSW Homeworkers Ministry Support Fund

Your Treasurers report that we have received undesigned gifts as follows:-

	2012	2011
January to August	\$71,632	\$71,288
Sept: from Assemblies	4,237	2,155
from NSWAEM	1,000	1,000
from other sources	38	14
Christmas Gifts	2,000	1,225
	7,275	\$4,394
Oct: from Assemblies	1,655	1,805
from NSWAEM	0	2,700
from other sources	10,651	7,882
Christmas Gifts	1,500	1,500
	\$13,806	\$13,887
Totals	\$92,713	\$89,569

The funds (in 2012), except for special designated gifts, were divided between 19 workers and their families for September and October.

The Riverstone Assembly will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2013

We will be having a “Back to Rivo” dinner on April 6th in order to praise the Lord for His faithfulness and blessing throughout these years.

All who have been part of the Assembly may anticipate an invitation during February next.

We have seen the blessing of the Lord with steady growth and many young families joining us – giving us a positive outlook for the future.

As we endeavour to reach this area for Christ we appreciate the prayers of all the Lord’s people.

Ken Harding



Riverstone Community Church of Christian Brethren
15 Hamilton Street
Riverstone NSW 2765
(PO Box 189)

Nicodemus – a Pharisee who came to Jesus

by Don Stormer

This is the fourth in a series of six Pen Portraits which Mr Stormer has written about people mentioned in John's Gospel. The first was published in the June 2012 issue of this magazine.

The apostle John wrote about Nicodemus on three occasions.

In John 3 he is a man in the dark. In John 7:50 he appears as a man in the shadows. At the time the Lord died we see him as a man who comes into the open.

When we think of Nicodemus we think immediately of the visit to Jesus by night. John records the visit in these words: "Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him,

'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.'"

Immediately prior to telling the story of Nicodemus John comments that many people were interested in Jesus because they saw the signs he was doing (2:23). Jesus did not entrust himself to people who were looking for no more than displays of miraculous power. Was Nicodemus one of these people? Probably not. The word translated 'now' sometimes has the force of 'but'. Jesus did not entrust himself to certain people, but (or, on the other hand) there was Nicodemus. Jesus saw that there was something deeper in this Pharisee. The effect that the signs had on Nico-

demus was to make him realise that behind the signs there was a teacher who had come from God. No one could perform the signs Jesus was doing unless God were with him.

Who was Nicodemus? He was a man of the Pharisees and therefore was an upright man, a citizen of good standing in the community. We're told that he was a ruler of the Jews; he was a member of the Sanhedrin. Jesus also referred to him as the teacher of Israel, an indication that he had a recognised and important role in teaching the Law to Israel.

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. Why? As a teacher in Israel (or probably, "the" teacher in Israel) it is possible that he was too busy to come during the day. On the other hand there are indications that the rabbis did much of their study and debating in the evenings. Others suggest he did not want fellow Pharisees to know what he was doing, so he came "secretly".

We don't know his motives; in the end they were not of vital importance. The Lord did not change his message to suit the visitor; the teacher in Israel still needed to learn he had to be born again to enter the kingdom of heaven.

What was the Lord's message to Nicodemus? First, he had to be born >16

‘Who was
Nicodemus?’

again, or born from above, in order to enter the kingdom of God. Nicodemus would certainly not have been expecting a message like that and he immediately had difficulty in understanding it. For him, entry into the kingdom of God came through faithfully keeping the law. As a Pharisee, an upright man, a citizen of good standing and as a member of the Sanhedrin, he would have had no doubt that he was well qualified to enter the kingdom. But the Lord said he needed to be born again.

To Nicodemus' credit, he didn't argue that he was morally fit for the kingdom even though he had difficulty understanding Jesus' message. But his reaction to the Lord's message was no different from that of thousands of others since. He tried to understand spiritual truths in physical terms. How, he asked, can a man enter his mother's womb in order to be born a second time?

This brought the Lord to the second part of His message. He carefully explained that He was speaking of spiritual matters. One had to be born of water and spirit in order to enter the kingdom of God. Since Nicodemus should have understood what the Lord was referring to, the meaning of this disputed metaphor must be found in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Passages like Ezekiel 36:25-27 suggest the need for cleansing from impurity (water as a symbol for cleansing from impurity is common in the Old Testament) linked with having a new heart and a new spirit – the regenerating work of the Spirit of God.

In the same way that human beings give birth to human beings (that which is born of the flesh is flesh) so the Spirit, and only the Spirit, gives birth to spirit. Being born of water and spirit is the equivalent of being born again or being born from above. And all this is a process which we do not understand. In the same way that we can hear the sound of the wind and yet not know the full extent of all that is involved, so those who have only experienced human birth cannot understand the effects of the work and operations of the Spirit.

Nicodemus was puzzled by all this. Some even suggest that he was sceptical. "How can this happen?" His question was met by another. In effect, the Lord asked "How is it that you don't understand?" Nicodemus' standing as a recognised teacher did not give him the insight needed to grasp spiritual truth. He didn't even receive Jesus' testimony when he spoke about the things he had seen. And since they (Nicodemus and his fellow Jews) couldn't believe ➤

• He tried to understand spiritual truths in physical terms. •

the earthly things about which Jesus was speaking, it was highly unlikely that they would believe heavenly things. If they couldn't understand the necessity of being born again while on earth in order to enter the kingdom of God, how could they appreciate the truths that relate to the coming kingdom when the kingdom is realised in all its glorious magnificence?

So we come to the crux of the third part of Jesus' message – the importance of faith. No one has ascended into heaven to appreciate the coming beauties of the kingdom except the one who came from there – Son of Man. Eternal life will depend on the Son of Man being lifted up in a manner similar to the way that Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. Then all who believe in the Son of Man will receive eternal life. Faith is what makes the new birth a reality.

Did Nicodemus believe the message that he heard? At that time? It is very doubtful that he believed that evening but his subsequent actions indicate that he did come to faith in the Lord Jesus.

The second time we read about Nicodemus he comes out of the dark into the shadows. The chief priests and the Pharisees had sent some of the temple guards to arrest Jesus. They returned to their bosses empty-

handed. They had been so impressed with the Lord's words that they didn't arrest Him. They reported that "no one ever spoke the way this man does".

When some of the Pharisees condemned the guards for being so gullible Nicodemus asked "Does our law condemn a man without first hearing what he has to say?" Though he did not openly acknowledge the claims of Jesus of Nazareth, he risked the wrath of his fellow Pharisees. In abusive terms they asked if he too were from Galilee for "a prophet does not come out of Galilee". Their hatred of Jesus blinded them to the truth that occasionally a prophet did come from Galilee. Or had they not realised that Jonah came from there?


The third time we read about Nicodemus he's more openly a follower of Jesus Christ. When the Lord's body was taken down from the cross, Nicodemus was with Joseph of Arimathea helping him to prepare the body for burial. Now; we may think this would not have been a very difficult thing to do. But it did require great courage. The chief priests and the Pharisees knew where the body of Jesus had been buried – they arranged for soldiers to guard the tomb. They would have known whose tomb was used and therefore they knew who was involved. The actions of Joseph and Nicodemus can only mean that ➤18

*‘Faith is what
makes the new birth
a reality.’*

they were secret disciples no longer; they were now proclaiming their allegiance to Jesus of Nazareth. And it would not have been easy to align oneself with a man who had been crucified as a criminal.

What do we learn? There are two important lessons. First, the way of salvation is not grasped by the natural man. He fails to see the necessity of the new birth. He can only think in terms of human experience; he fails to grasp spiritual realities. But unless he comes to faith in Jesus Christ – unless he is born from above – he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Second, it is important that we come out of the shadows and proclaim our loyalty to Christ. Many of us can empathise with Nicodemus. We know from experience that it's not easy to take a firm stand. Yet a time comes when we must stand and be counted. God worked in Nicodemus so that others clearly knew where he stood. God works in us too, strengthening us to be bold for Him. We also need to encourage those who, because of natural reticence, find it difficult to talk about their faith. Perhaps, we need to give expression to our faith by means of our deeds. This is just what Nicodemus finally did when he assisted in the burial of the Lord Jesus – he showed his faith and his love by what he did.

And there are ways in which **each one of us** can “spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24). 

ASSEMBLIES OUTREACH MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2013

are due in *January*

prices are now:—

1. Annual subscription – for 6 issues of the normal printed-on-paper version. **\$30**
(includes P&P to anywhere in Australia.)

2. Annual subscription for an emailed PDF version of each issue **in addition to** the paper version. **\$4**

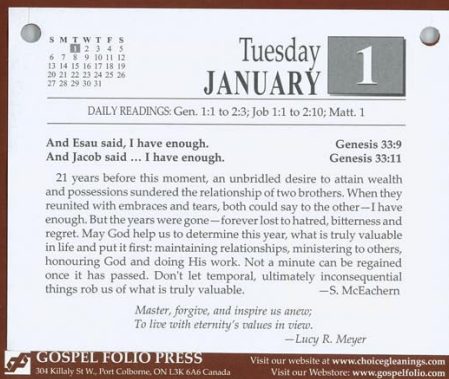
(This can **only** be ordered by individuals, via email, whether they receive the magazine personally or via their assembly. In the latter case, the email order must include the assembly name and be paid for separately from the magazine.)

3. Annual subscription - for 6 issues of the emailed PDF version alone. (This can **only** be ordered by individuals, via email.) **\$10**

Reminder Invoices will be issued to all current subscribers in early January.

Payment can be made by Cheque, Money Order, or by Direct Deposit to BSB 062-212 Account 00902021, and please put the words “AO mag for <your surname>” in the ‘Description’ field.

Calendars for 2013 still available



from your local
church contact

OR

FROM:

**Christian Outreach
Book Service,
(rear) 29 George Street
BURWOOD**

**P.O. Box 640
Burwood 1805**

**Ph: (02) 9715 5520
Fax: (02) 9715 5580**

Some features of **Choice Gleanings**:

- ❖ **Great value for yourself or an ideal gift for the Christmas season.**
- ❖ **Programmed readings to cover the whole Bible in one year.**
- ❖ **Helpful comments for each day.**
- ❖ **Each day, at 'tear-off time', your gift will continue to help someone remember you in prayer.**

ORDER FORM

'Choice Gleanings' Calendar: Quantity _____ @ \$14.50 each (postage extra)
'Australian Bible Gems' Calendar: Quantity _____ @ \$7.95 each (postage extra)
'Easy To See' Calendar: Quantity _____ @ \$7.00 each (postage extra)

Name _____

Postal Address _____

ALMSGIVING FOR AGED LIVING. CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION.

Incorporating FIFTY YEARS of Aged Care at BETHSHEAN NSW
Home for Aged Christians at Hurlstone Park, Sydney 1949 - 1999

By Dr Victor M Wilson



**DEDICATED AND WITH ETERNAL GRATITUDE TO ALL WHO HAVE GIVEN OF
THEIR TALENTS, TREASURES, AND TIME IN THE SPIRIT OF TRUE ALMS GIVING
FOR THE SERVICE OF PROVIDING SPIRITUAL, PHYSICAL, MENTAL COMFORT
AND HAPPINESS TO THOSE IN THE TWILIGHT YEARS OF THEIR LIVES.**

ALMSGIVING FOR AGED LIVING; CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION.

Dr Victor Wilson has written this 160 page, A4 sized, book (with easy-to-see print) in which he traces the subject of Almsgiving generally from a Christian point of view based on the prominence given to this subject both in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.

His book covers from very early days, the caring of the elderly, the sick and the infirm in the home situation, and then progressing onto institutional facilities even as far back as one thousand years ago. The narrative continues up to the present in the Western World, especially in the British Isles with the appearance and maintenance of Almshouses. Dr Wilson then continues the subject in the Sydney (Australia) scene – from the early Colonial days and on through the intervening years, dealing with the evolution of the Care of the Aged in the context of the Assemblies of Christians commonly known as Open Brethren, with the establishment of BETHSHEAN, New South Wales Home FOR AGED CHRISTIANS, at 67 Floss Street, Hurlstone Park, in November 1949.

Finally, Dr Wilson describes how, in order to satisfy accreditation standards, as changes inevit-

ably developed in the Aged Care scene, and to fulfil the completion of Elouera Gardens Retirement Village, Bethshean was relocated in 1999 to a new facility built on large sunny acreage set aside thirty years previously in Cherrybrook. This book is dedicated to the brothers and sisters in Christ who have given of their talents, treasures, and time in the spirit of true Alms Giving for the purpose of providing Spiritual, Physical, Mental Comfort and Happiness to those in the twilight years of their lives.

COPIES of this large format book, illustrated with both black & white and colour photos from various decades, may be obtained by writing to:-

Dr V. Wilson at PO Box 1041, Cronulla, 2230, NSW, Australia.

Alternatively, email him at:-

vicdawil@bigpond.net.au

or phone (02) 9527 1203.

The cost is \$50 per copy. Please pay by cheque or money order.

All proceeds from the sale of the book will be directed to the new project of Christian Mission International Aid (CMIAid) for the establishment of the Aged Care Facility at the BETHESDA CENTRE, ZIRNESTI, MOLDOVA.

I was working in my study when I heard our clock that is a family heirloom, and is over 100 years-old, strike the hour of three. This signalled a coffee break.

I had just begun to enjoy my caffeine hit when someone knocked on our front door. When I opened the door I was delighted to see one of my younger grandsons standing there.

It just happened that I was wearing a short sleeve shirt and I noticed that his eyes were transfixed upon the tattoo on my right forearm. He raised his eyes and looking straight into mine said, "Awesome Pop, you're real cool." He was referring to the obvious obsession of the younger generation with having the greater part of their bodies covered with this ancient pagan art form.

The object that attracted his attention was a small 6cm x 6cm green, red and black tattoo on my arm. His interest stirred my memory to a day many years ago when I went to a Tattoo Parlour in King Street, Sydenham, and had the tattoo indelibly etched into my arm.

It was a Saturday afternoon and by 2pm I was, with a friend of mine, anything but sober.

He made the suggestion that we should catch a tram to Sydenham and get a Tattoo.

When we arrived there we picked out the design that we wanted from a

large folder of different options. The cost of our choice was 7 shillings and 6 pence, or 75 cents.

Just on that point, recently I was waiting in a line to purchase a newspaper that I like to read each day just to keep up with things. There was a young man standing behind me and I noticed that he had both arms covered with Tattoos. Out of curiosity I asked him how much they cost. He replied \$6,000 and they were not yet completed. I mentioned that mine cost me just 75 cents!

The actual tattooing was anything but a pleasant experience. From memory there was something like 20 needles going into my arm driven by an electric vibrator.

After a day or so, the entire wound scabs up and is rather sore. I might say that the operator never once asked us if we'd reached the mandatory age of 18. In point of fact we were only 17. However the greater pain was yet to come.

I arrived home and announced to my mother that I had just been tattooed. To say the least, she was anything but happy with me! She made me promise that I would never get another. Her anger was slightly appeased when I told her that it was her name that I had placed on my arm, and not a girlfriend's name, past or present.

Just a thought about hygiene: When I was twenty-three and married, we ➤

‘the greater pain was yet to come’

were on holidays at Forster when I developed a painful infection called Prostatitis. It was so painful that I went to a local doctor. When I explained to him the problem he noticed my tattoo, which prompted him to ask me a rather embarrassing question. He asked, "Have you ever had VD"? I indignantly replied that I most certainly had not.

He explained the reason for his question. Prostatitis can be a consequence of several types of venereal diseases. Then he went on to explain, that sailors are renowned for being carriers of this disease; they are also fond of tattoos. They come into a parlour and get a tattoo, then they walk out and you walk in, and the operator uses the same machine and needles on you that he used on him. He explained that this was a common cause of these diseases.

There are some things in my life that I regret. One of them is the day that while half drunk I got that tattoo on my arm. I am so embarrassed about it now that I always wear a long-sleeved shirt when I am involved in ministry for the Lord.

With the life-changing experience of being Born Again behind me, my knowledge of the Bible has grown exponentially. So I thought that I should see if the Bible offered any advice about tattooing your body. I

wasn't surprised to find that it did have something to say. The verse that came readily to mind was:-

Leviticus 19:28 (RSV)

"You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh on account of the dead, or tattoo any marks upon you: I am the LORD."

This verse appears to forbid God's people to be tattooed. Some wise person once said that a text taken out of its context becomes a pretext. So what was the context in which this verse appears? God was forbidding His people from copying the cultural practices of their pagan neighbours.

While the specific things mentioned no longer have the same cultural significance they did at the time of writing, however, the practice of doing the things that the pagans by nature do, are still forbidden for the Believer.

I also noticed that in Genesis we are told that we were made in God's image.

Genesis 1:27 (NIV) *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."*

I wonder if our God and Father would be happy with His image being marked by tattoos?

Then again, we are reminded in Paul's message to the Corinthians >24

‘... this was a common cause of these diseases.’

that our bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:19 (NIV)

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;"

I ask myself the question, "Would the Holy Spirit like His temple to be covered with tattooist's ink graffiti"? Then, to the tattoo enthusiast I would suggest that you leave room on your foreheads and hands to make room for the Tattoo of the number of the Beast, the Antichrist.



In conclusion, if you were to ask me if it is OK or not for you to have tattoos on your body, I think that my reply would be – "If I could roll back the hands-of-time and I had the opportunity to say 'Yes' or 'No' to my tattoo, – because of my Christian faith – I would say **"No"**.

Remember –

**tattoos are like spouses;
they are yours until
'death do you part.'**



Watch and Pray

When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane before He went to the cross, He was in emotional agony. He moved away from His disciples and prayed alone. He also asked His followers to pray for Him. When He came back to them, they were asleep. He challenged them with the words "Watch and pray."

It's an interesting phrase "watch and pray". A great Christian thinker J.C. Ryle made the following comments....

"Watching without praying is self conceit.

"Praying without watching is fanaticism.

"The person who knows their own weakness, and knowing it, both watches and prays, is the person who will be held up and not allowed to fall."

To watch and pray brings personal insight and spiritual reliance together. Insight says we need to do our bit to help. The discipline of prayer says we know that we need to take our personal weaknesses and challenges to God for the help we need.

Today, be sure to watch and pray.



Here are some more things on the World Wide Web which readers may find interesting and worth a visit via your computer .

Please Note: to make it easier to visit these web sites they have been included as 'hot links' in the PDF version of this magazine and they are listed on the NSW Christian Brethren web site at:-

www.cb-nsw.org.au/useful-links/Links-AO.html

If you want to subscribe to the PDF version in addition to, or instead of, this paper version – please contact me by email and I'll send a free sample:-

outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au

* * *

In the June 2012 issue (page 30) of Uplook Magazine (PDF version) Crawford Paul wrote a brief article about **Using Social Video to Reach the Lost**. The following is an extract:-

"According to its own statistics, YouTube has 800 million unique users who visit every month. Over three billion videos are viewed every single day! More video is uploaded to YouTube in one month than the three major US networks have created in 60 years! Those numbers only refer to YouTube and don't include other video hosting sites. Video is one of the best ways to share information. It provides the opportunity to reach millions through a medium that grabs

the heart of the viewer.

"One question that I hear is, "Isn't video expensive and hard to do?" When it comes to professional video production, that might be true, but it's not true of social video. Today's YouTube watcher isn't so concerned about seeing TV-quality video. They are more interested in the content. With that in mind, video becomes very affordable and relatively easy to use. Most point and shoot cameras and smart phones offer high resolution video and even have a direct upload to YouTube. Social sites such as Facebook also offer apps to upload video directly. There are many tutorials online showing how this is done."

[At this point Crawford includes some hints about how to make a video to present the gospel. The full article can be found by Googling 'Uplook Magazine' and finding the June issue in the Archives.]

"So give video a shot! Set up an account with YouTube or Vimeo and put your videos out there. It can be fun – as well as being an excellent way to reach the world for Christ. Here are a few websites you can check out to see others doing video for the Lord and to get some ideas:-

www.skitplanet.com

www.skitguys.com

www.ignitermedia.com/mini-movies



PLEASE submit all your items, news or letters for the February 2013 magazine on, or before, 18th January.

RECALL NOTICE

The Maker of all human beings (GOD Almighty) is recalling all units manufactured (regardless of make or year) due to a serious defect in the primary and central component of the heart.

This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units – code named Adam and Eve, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units.

This defect has been identified as “Sub-sequential Internal Non- morality” – more commonly known as S.I.N, as it is primarily expressed.

Some of the symptoms include:–

1. Loss of direction.
2. Foul vocal emissions.
3. Amnesia of origin.
4. Lack of peace and joy.
5. Selfish or violent behaviour.
6. Depression or confusion.
7. Fearfulness.
8. Idolatry.
9. Rebellion.

The Manufacturer, who is neither liable nor at fault for this defect, is providing factory-authorized repair and service **free of charge** to correct the defect.

The Repair Technician, JESUS, has most generously offered to bear the entire burden of the staggering cost of these repairs. There is no additional fee required. The number to call for repair in any areas of the world is:

P-R-A-Y-E-R

Once connected, please upload your burden of SIN by using the REPENTANCE procedure.

Next, download ATONEMENT from the Repair Technician, Jesus, into the heart component.

No matter how big or small the SIN defect appears to be, Jesus will replace it with:–

1. Love.
2. Joy.
3. Peace.
4. Patience.
5. Kindness.
6. Goodness.
7. Faithfulness.
8. Gentleness.
9. Self-control.

Please see the operating manual, the **B.I.B.L.E.** (BEST Instructions Before Leaving Earth) for further details on the use of these important elements.

WARNING: Continuing to operate the human being unit without such correction voids any manufacturer warranties; exposing the unit to dangers and problems too numerous to list, and will result in the human unit being permanently impounded. For free emergency service, call on Jesus.

DANGER: Any human being units not responding to this recall action will have to be scrapped in the furnace. The SIN defect will NOT be permitted to enter Heaven – to prevent contamination of that facility. Thank you for your attention!

signed.

Highest Herald Angel.

P.S. Please assist where possible by notifying others of this important Recall Notice.

For further information you may contact the Father any time by ‘Knee mail’!



N.S.W. ASSEMBLIES EVANGELISTIC MISSION

ACN 001 037 690

OFFICE & BOOK SERVICE

Rear of 29 George Street,
BURWOOD, NSW 2134
P.O. Box 640,
BURWOOD NSW 1805
Ph: 9715 5520 Fax: 9715 5528

CHAIRMAN of BOARD

Charles Williams

BOARD MEMBERS

J. Pretty, K. Price,
C.J. Riseham, C. Winrow.

SECRETARIAT

Graham Hayden
Email: aemcobs@bigpond.com

MAGAZINE

Editor - Colin Winrow
0412 596 104
Email: outreach-mag@optusnet.com.au

AIMS

- To plan, initiate and support the expansion of Evangelism and Church Growth, primarily among Christian Brethren Assemblies.
- To offer opportunities in this *Assemblies Outreach* Magazine for Home Workers, Assemblies, Para-Assembly Activities and other kindred bodies, to publicise and explain their ministries.
- To generate funds, through the Book Service and other means, toward the support of NSW Home Workers.
- To provide appropriate teaching for Christians.

Further information about the Mission can be read on the NSW Brethren web site at:— www.cb-nsw.org.au/aem/

A TRADITION OF CHRISTIAN CARE & CONCERN



FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED
FUNERALS CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT SYDNEY

Please call Richard Spiteri
for personal care and attention

Members of the Funeral Directors Association of NSW

24 Hour Care Line ☎ 8883 4561
www.christianfuneralsosydney.com.au

Richard and Deborah Spiteri, proprietors



Elouera Gardens



Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre



Glenhaven Gardens



Carinya House



Lynden Grove



Groves House

Elouera Gardens Christian Retirement Village, Cherrybrook NSW

Elouera Gardens comprises 75 independent living units with 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units, surrounded by pleasant gardens. It offers a wide variety of styles and sizes of units and a supportive Christian community.

Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre, Cherrybrook NSW

Set in well established gardens, and with an enviable reputation for delivering a high standard of care, the 110 bed Cherrybrook Christian Care Centre provides high and low level care and special support for people living with dementia.

Glenhaven Gardens Retirement Village, Glenhaven, NSW

Glenhaven Gardens offers modern and spacious 2 and 3 bedroom villas. The village comprises 24 air-conditioned and private units, with either a garage or carport. All units are wheelchair accessible for those who need a little extra room to help with their mobility.

Carinya House, Glenhaven NSW

Carinya House is a 60 bed care centre providing high and low-level care support in a setting where residents enjoy the tranquil bushland setting and partake in a very full and stimulating recreational program. It includes a secure dementia support area and also offers ageing-in-place.

Lynden Grove Retirement Village, Cardiff Heights, NSW

Lynden Grove has 44 modern 2 and 3 bedroom villas. It has a semi-rural outlook with picturesque Mount Sugar Loaf as a back drop. It is in a pleasant and quiet bushland setting, yet close to local shopping centres.

Groves House, Cardiff Heights NSW

Set on a ridge with panoramic views to the mountains, Groves House is a 60 bed care centre providing low-level care, dementia care and ageing-in-place to the people of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the surrounding districts.

For more information about any of our services please don't hesitate to call our Client Services Team on 02 9842 4111.