

Our dream for 2020

LEADER'S LETTER

When I see the numbers 2020 I always connect it with the measure for ideal vision. If only we had perfect vision we would be able to operate in the world so much better – or would we?

I have had personal experience of the frustration of imperfect vision for the last couple of years. I had so many floaters in my left eye that they had joined into little colonies so they could interfere with my vision even more effectively. Sure, I could see, but always through a blur of interference. Finally I realised I had to do something about it and eventually found myself on an operating table having the inside of my eye sucked out and replaced with clear fluid. The result has been spectacular. I can now see so much better. Things have sharp edges (as long as I wear my glasses!) and no blurry bits interfering with my view. I can concentrate my gaze on one place for more than 5 seconds without the blur moving to central vision.

What has all this got to do with our dream for 2020? Well, it has made me think that even though we know what the world, and all that is in it, should look like, we often only see things blurrily. There are so many conflicting pieces of interference that can persuade us to take our eye off the main point. There are so many people trying to tell us that things are all OK



Jill Robertson

really. But we know that if we remove the interference, and concentrate our gaze, then things are clearly not all brilliant.

In Wellspring Community we are here because we have a vision of what the world should be like:

- God should be acknowledged
- Humans should be able to live with each other in peace and justice
- The planet should be cared for

The challenge for us all is to find ways of making those “shoulds” come into the present tense. In Wellspring we are certainly aiming to do that, and our future needs to be one of keeping up

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Our Dream for 2020” continued . . .

our enthusiasm to continue the work we are already doing and gathering more hands to share the work with us. Catching a clear vision is the first step.

My vision is to see the generations younger than most of the Wellspring friends and members come and take their place on Council and in leadership positions. We need young movers and shakers with a deep faith in God to be our trail blazers and lead the rest of us with them. They are clearly there as we hear about such people in the School for Discipleship that Doug and Isobel Hewitt were involved with, and with the outpouring of enthusiasm about things spiritual in the events of the World Youth Day held recently in Sydney. I hope we can tap into that.

The other side of experiencing good vision is that we can also appreciate what is truly good and working well and encourage that. There is much to applaud and encourage, and if we don't acknowledge the good things that are going on, then those people will lose heart. The role of the encourager is vital.

Let's not give up striving for good vision and encouraging one another in creating a better world.

Jill Robertson

Introducing the new Administrator

Hi I'm Sally – Sally Horne - and I'm excited to become Administrative Office for Wellspring.

Now where to start. My parents, who were teachers, were married in Picton NSW by a friend, Rev'd Allan Hewitt - Doug's father! I have a much younger sister who is my best friend.

I live in Gosford NSW and I was married to Merv Horne a widower. I "inherited" two fantastic, wonderful sons. I have three brilliant grandchildren and a tiny great grand-daughter. Superlatives abound because I am so blessed and only a little biased!! Merv died six years ago.

My prayer partners at that time were Rev'd Rod Bower, Rector of the Anglican Church Gosford and Rev'd Penny Jones. These two spiritual and prophetic people encouraged me to become Administrator in the Parish.

I had been employed in supervisory administrative roles throughout my 25 year business career so I was able to evolve that position during the next five years into full time Parish Administrator.



Sally Horne

I turn 65 in August and last year Father Rod and I began discussions regarding my retirement. Through prayer I realised I needed to be less busy - to spend time with God. I finished work on 29 February 2008.

I am attracted to the "incarnational theology" of Wellspring with interests in many of the "areas of concern". Recently I have met with a Wellspring group at Woy Woy. Lisa Wriley also attends this meeting and we greet each other with "How are your worms?" (Encouraged by Lisa I established a worm farm five years ago.)

As well as my spiritual life which includes contemplative prayer both in community and individually my time is taken up with my wonderful family, reading, gardening and playing Scrabble with my sister over the Internet!

I believe God has called me to Wellspring – I know you will pray for me as, indeed, I pray for you.

Ed. Please note Sally will be in the city office on Mondays only.

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Member News

Alex Mills has sent us news of his son, Stewart, who attended an ecumenical service on Friday 18th July led by the Pope. Stewart, one of the younger representatives, was given a medallion and a set of rosary beads. On Thursday night he was a member of an interfaith panel and had the opportunity to make a couple of brief comments. (His father-in-law, Max, who was very significant in establishing the Korean church at

Auburn, previously met Pope Paul II.) Alex attended the evening with his family.



Above: Alex Mills with son Stewart



Right: Stewart with Xavier

We are God's Dreaming

I was excited and inspired by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's 2020 Summit. It opened up avenues for discussion and all kinds of Australians were involved and invited to contribute. There were the 'knockers', of course, who said it was only a 'talkfest' and nothing would come of it. The 2020 Summit provided an opportunity for Australia to express its dream for the future.

We are seeing changes this year in Australia, mostly instigated by our new Labour Government. It seems so much has happened already this year and we have some months yet to go before it ends. What else is in store for 2008? Maybe a very different President in the USA?

We have rejoiced at Kevin Rudd's apology to the Stolen Generations; at the Labour Government's acknowledgement that global warming IS a reality and we need to move quickly to alleviate its fast-growing effects; while recently we saw Senator Chris Evans announce changes to Australia's immigration detention policy. In another arena, we shared the joyfulness of thousands of youth who joined together in Sydney for World Youth Day, and a positive "press" for Christianity was one outcome.

Wellspring Community members and friends express their dreams for a better future each day, each week, each month, as we pray for our selves, our families, our communities, for our spiritual and church life, and for the big issues of justice and peace, reconciliation and healing, and for the environment. Our prayers lead us to action as we attempt to be an active force for good in God's world.

On 17 July my fifth grandchild was born in Melbourne. Her name is Ghislaine Eloise Motteau. Not a



Ghislaine Eloise Motteau

very Australian-sounding name – but indicative of the fact that Australia is a multi-cultural society. Her grandmother Helen is English. Her grandfather Hugues is Belgian, and hence she will have the right to dual citizenship of Belgium and Australia. I hope she grows up to speak French, to be able to say, "Bonjour mon cher grand-père. Je parle français. Comment ça va? J'aime tu. Au revoir. A bientôt, Papa." Her grandparents were white farmers in Zimbabwe, but were forced to flee the country for England about ten years ago. Their faith sustains them. Ghislaine's mother's parents are dinky-die aussies.

I doubt much will have changed by the time she is 12. My guess is that Mugabe will be gone, but Zimbabwe will still be facing the huge task of reconstruction. Hopefully Karadzic will have been indicted for war crimes. Life prospects for our indigenous people may have improved, and people may have "bitten the bullet" and adjusted to the demands to change their life-styles in order to save the planet! Perhaps, through good government and the example of relevant and inclusive faith, we will have become a more caring, generous and compassionate people.

The world for Ghislaine will still look pretty grim – war, over-population,

scarce resources, droughts, selfishness and greed will still be major issues. My hope for her is not only that she will have a faith to live by which gives her life purpose and meaning and that she is generous and compassionate, but that she has the motive, the passion, the ability to take responsibility, to work to make the world a better place. My prayer for Ghislaine is that she will not become cynical or give way to despair, but will see the world for the wonderful, enthralling, challenging place that it is. Fearless courage will be her greatest asset.

As I write this I feel enfolded by God's dreaming. God dreamed all that is into being – all the variety and diversity – dreamed us as God's special creatures through whom God could dream all that is loving, awesome, wonderful, beautiful, intelligent and creative, could dream a being with which to share all that is. Isn't it amazing that each of us has a tiny share in God's dreaming for Life?

Bonita Frank

2020

The greater danger
for most of us
is not that our aim is
too high
and we miss it,
but that it is
too low
and we reach it.

Michaelangelo (1475-1564)

The best yakfest and hullabaloo in town

John Ralston Saul, in his *The Unconscious Civilization*, writes of the great value of town hall meetings, discussion and exploration of political matters, and vigorous conversations among citizens in maintaining a vibrant democracy. The seemingly inefficient chattering and reassessing that goes on in conversations contrast with the corporate drive that excludes debate in its quest for technical resolution and fast forward profitable movement. If you want to keep a democracy, keep talking, Saul argues.

The 2020 Summit was the culmination of many town hall meetings – 500 school meetings and thousands of on-line conversations, a Youth Summit and a Jewish Summit – and was full of chatter. It fitted with Garrison Keillor's description of poetry (as opposed to managerial prose) as:

being on the side of exhilaration and the stupendous vision, the sight of the stars through the barred window, the perfection of small birds, the democracy of their chattering language and of our own yakfest and hullabaloo.

The media coverage of the Summit has been vintage colour-me-cynical Australian-beige. Virtually none has addressed the Summit as instrument of democratic life. Instead, the dull uniformity of articles and clips asserting that no good thing can come from the Summit has been depressing. That we have a prime minister capable of scholarly reflection and grasp, at ease discussing ideas rather than sending them off-shore to an island quarantine station, has largely escaped their attention. Only a fragment of the Summit material has thus far been published and it will be weeks before it all becomes available, but most media have already closed the books.



Professor Stephen R. Leeder

The single most interesting idea (in the Health Strategy Stream) for me related to prevention. I learned from the CEO of Woolworths, Michael Luscombe, that Coke Zero and Diet Coke cost one third less to produce than sugar laden Coke. An interesting possibility exists for a conversation with Amatil, formerly of tobacco fame and that now runs Coca Cola, for preferential pricing for the less health damaging Zero.

This, we agreed, was the kind of conversation that the prime minister could lead with benefit with major urban developers, food manufacturers and retailers in pursuit of making it easier for people to choose goods that do no screw up their health. He could convene such a meeting as a follow-up to the Summit, in the spirit of the Summit. Seated around the table the CEOs of companies that build our cities, design our parks and cycle ways, determine the style of new buildings, decide upon the walkability of a new suburbs, choose what food will be retailed, advertise it, run our commercial gyms and more, the PM could say, 'Ladies and Gentlemen: we have a problem and its called obesity. What are we going to do about it?' Small changes by CEOs ripple into waves – slowly reducing salt, fat and

sugar in processed foods, designing mandatory park space so that people use it rather than avoid it, developing coherent walkability plans for cities and so forth could all be done at low cost through the combination of commercial, community and political will. Such a forum was recommended.

Fears that the Summit attendees would be a 'white bread' congregation were allayed by the diversity of those present. Parliament House felt less like the headquarters of a major accounting and management consulting corporation. Instead, its major assembly point was more like the packed, grand entrance to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, milling with enthusiastic patrons on a winter Sunday afternoon. It felt like the Sydney Olympics, with volunteer ushers, scribes, and facilitators, crowds, chatter, laughter, youthfulness, optimism and anticipation, and a touch of tinsel. I felt pleased to be alive and delighted to be there.

Professor Stephen R. Leeder

Director, The Australian Health Policy Institute

Co-Director, The Menzies Centre for Health Policy

The University of Sydney, 2006

Stephen Leeder attends Leura Uniting Church when in the Blue Mountains. He also attended the Summit. This article is published with his permission.



2020 Summit Meeting

Submission to Australia 2020 Summit

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORTING WORKING FAMILIES

In February 2008, I wrote a submission for the Australian 2020 Summit: Strengthening communities and supporting working families. My submission addressed my deep concern for Australia's correctional centres to be places of light where healing of body, mind and spirit can occur.

In March 2008, Australia had 80,265 persons under the authority of corrective services (excluding those in periodic detention) (Australian Bureau of Statistics). The Nagle Report on NSW prisons included these quotes:

"...When 'society' inflicts a punishment on those who have offended against its laws, society is obliged to avoid subjecting them to a corrupting system in the place where they are held captive, not to increase their misfortune by increasing their vices. Society has the right to punish, but not to corrupt those punished. ... no one recognises its rights to deprave them." (Gustave de Beaumont in de Tocqueville and de Beaumont "On Social Reform")

"The mood and temper of the public with regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the civilisation of any country." (Winston Churchill, House of Commons, 20 July, 1910)

The discussion paper for the 2020 Summit stated that *"The costs of substance abuse are borne by communities as well as individuals"*. It listed crime as a tangible cost. Labelling those incarcerated in our gaols as 'tangible costs' deprives these people of their humanity. People within our correctional institutions incur costs. Desirably, much of the cost should come from helping these people return to their communities with self-esteem

and restored relationships. Sadly, this is not the case.

A further statement in the Summit's discussion paper stated that *"Australia has relatively high crime, and people feel less safe than in many other countries"*. This statement perpetuates an unfortunate trend of generating fear in Australia. This fear allows the wider community to ignore the dehumanising institutionalisation that many inmates experience in our country's correctional centres. The *"lock them up and throw away the key"* attitude denigrates all Australians. We ignore the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs of many inmates suffering from mental illness, substance and other forms of abuse (physical, mental, emotional, institutional). It allows us to avoid the confronting question, *"Why do people make decisions that lead them to our courts and gaols?"*

This poem is written by Tracy who is in Northfield Women's Prison. Published with permission

Vinson and Chao asked, *"Can Prisons be Human?"* (American Criminal Prevention Conference, July/August, 1990), contending that, *"It is possible to find prison systems whose essential humanness – and most compelling feature – resides in the simple fact that staff and prisoners relate spontaneously and diversely in the way usually experienced in social life."*

My hope for 2020 is that the Wellspring Community will have engaged with the Vinson-Chao question and done all in its power to encourage their neighbours in their churches and in the wider community to join with them in ensuring that our gaols are places where people are encouraged to accept assistance to get their broken lives back on track and are given the time and tools to do so. *"All we like sheep have gone astray ..."*

Margaret Holm

A mum like you
So beautiful like you
Is a mum indeed
A mum with a warm heart
So caring and thoughtful
Is a mum I love dearly
Your eyes look at me
Looking at you
With all the pain in our hearts
The friction when holding you so tight
Does not want to let go
When you leave me I want to follow
While I walk the other way
My heart tares apart.



*Tracy
Northfield Women's Prison
appreciate our prayers*

World Youth Day – a complementary experience

Some events need better naming, World Youth Day for instance. It did not represent or speak for all of the world's youth; nor did it run for just one day. It did however bring together thousands of Catholic young people from many countries across the world, particularly those from small and impoverished nations in Asia and the Pacific. And it also brought together many thousands of Sydneysiders and other visitors into a city that buzzed with energy, excitement and geniality for seven days. It opened up conversations about religion and faith and belief across the media, and people watched the re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross on TV, perhaps hearing its story for the first time. The Pope is the spiritual leader of the world's Catholics and he honoured the people gathered in Sydney with his presence.

Huge efforts had been made in advance of this triennial event to ensure that Sydney would be able to welcome such a large number of guests and at the same time to see that the residents were able to go about their business

and daily lives without too much inconvenience.

Vast amounts of money were spent on advertising – of events, changes to traffic flows, public transport, the need for patience, the desire for a hospitable atmosphere and the best way to travel to either be part of, or avoid, the large and very happy crowds.

At the same time, in the heart of Sydney on the opposite side of Hyde Park to St Mary's Cathedral, was a parallel and complementary event. With little advertising or publicity people came to Taizé Prayer, so called because of a Christian ecumenical community of brothers who live, work and pray together in Taizé, a small village in France. Every week the brothers welcome thousands of young people from across Europe and other countries. The pilgrims go there to experience the shared prayer and to explore the big questions of their faith and their lives.

St James Anglican Church in King Street has long been the venue for quietly revolutionary ecumenical acts of Christian solidarity and this week

was no exception. From Monday to Friday of the WYD week people gathered for prayer, joined by three Brothers from the Taizé Community, who had come to Sydney in support of WYD and to offer young people an ecumenical experience of prayer. On the Monday the prayer began with the church maybe one third full. By the Thursday, when Br Alois the Prior of Taizé arrived, there was no spare seating, no more cushion space on the floor at the front of the church and no more standing room inside, either upstairs or down. People stood out on the steps and the footpath where they could at least listen to the singing.

And what singing it was. Led by Taizé Br Jean-Marie, Trish Watts and singers and musicians from St James Church and various places, the singing was like incense rising up and outwards, filling the church and extravagantly spilling its prayerful harmonies into the city streets.

We sang the songs in many languages, many times over, until the words had left our brains and moved closer to our hearts. Young people spoke simple prayers in their mother language.

At the final Prayer around the cross on the Friday evening, Br Alois spoke quietly of living with "reconciled hearts". He then invited the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and his wife Therese Rein to come and pray at the cross. They knelt for several minutes, returned to their seats and altogether stayed for two hours. No media, only the mobile phone cameras of many young pilgrims recorded this special time.

Taizé Prayer always includes a period of silence. On a cold winter's July night among well over a thousand people it is not easy to share a cough-free silence, but gradually the silence settled, grew quieter, ceased all but essential sounds of breathing and



Taizé SJKS



Taizé SJKS

briefly became one prayer. It is always a privilege to wait for that moment of oneness.

Over the week many Wellspring Community members and friends attended the Prayer which was arranged by the NSW Ecumenical Council. I'm sure they will agree with me that it was an extraordinary time of sharing in the energy and commitment of the many hundreds of young people who were there. Each

Prayer was a simple reminder of the things that give us meaning, joy and a deep sense of belonging.

After the conclusion of WYD Trish Watts wrote in an email to friends: "So great to experience such a satisfying depth-ing experience last week. I feel filled with hope again, and inspired!"

Trish will be leading worship next March at our National Gathering, so it seems appropriate to finish this story with the beautiful reflective

poem she wrote in response to that week, printed with her permission.

*WYD week has come and gone
and in its wake has raised both
a bubbling of Spirit and many
questions.*

*How to sustain a level of
inspiration?*

How to foster the seeds of hope?

*How to trust the ongoing presence
of goodness in each other?*

*How to practise Taizé friendship
at the core level of heart and soul?*

*How to live a radical love in these
times?*

Very important to have spiritual awareness raised into conversation at an every day level.

Love that!

The brothers of Taizé practise: simplicity, joy and mercy in all things.

It was a deeply nourishing experience to assist the brothers with Taizé prayer...I learn so much from their presence.

They ooze a humble trust in Christ.
peace and friendship

Trish

Gillian Hunt

Welcoming wild winds

"I often wonder if religion is the enemy of God. It's almost like religion is what happens when the Spirit has left the building." – Bono, lead singer of U2, Irish anti-poverty campaigner.

I don't go to church regularly anymore. My relationship with the Catholic church is probably best summed up by the great catch-all phrase for relationship status that can be added to your Facebook social networking profile: It's complicated. I translate this phrase as: mind your

own business, and no, I don't want to talk about it.

It's not my fault. I try, I do, but seems I'm just not very good at being part of mainstream institutions. That might have something to do with why I'm still single, too.

I turned up at Wellspring's gathering in 2007 on a bit of a whim. I found out about the gathering by googling Kathy Galloway, the leader of the Iona community, who I'd met while volunteering on Iona. I wanted to meet Kathy again.

Kathy is the person I would name as the "other party" in the demise of my relationship with the Catholic church. It's hard to explain to people from more inclusive Protestant traditions what it is like, as a Catholic woman, to sit in an ancient Abbey and watch another woman bless and break bread. An act so taboo it is not even allowed to be spoken about by Catholics.

The action and the words of the liturgy matched each other well:

So come to this table,

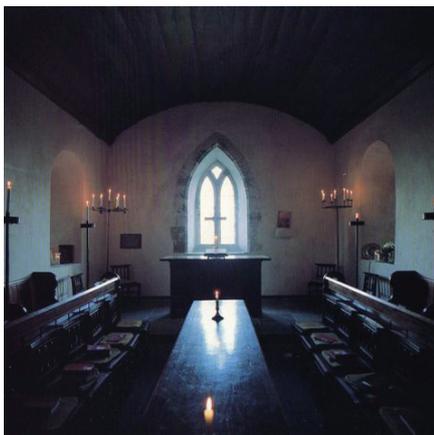
*You who have much faith
And you who would like to have more;
You who have been here often
And you who have not been for a long
time;
You who have tried to follow Jesus,
And you who have failed;
Come.*

Communion as food for the journey
and not a reward for good behaviour?
Something shifted inside me.

The Iona community distilled the
essence of the Christian message
in a radical, simple and inclusive
way. During my time on Iona,
denomination didn't matter.
Discussions were about how to live
your life, not what doctrines you
believed. And there was a place for
everyone at the table.

If my Catholic faith was luggage, I
had arrived on the island with way
too many suitcases full of stuff that
I didn't need and didn't fit anyway.
I was more than happy to unload it
all. I left with the spiritual equivalent
of a daypack containing just the
essentials. It was a very liberating
exchange.

From the ferry I watched as the
Abbey faded into the distance,
and eventually journeyed back to
Australia.



Above: Michael Chapel Iona Abbey

Right: Iona Abbey

I've struggled to find that same
sense of connection to a church
community here at home.

At the Wellspring gathering I met
some wonderful, wild, spirit filled
individuals. But I didn't experience
this same wildness at a community
level. I winced when non-inclusive
language snuck into a worship
service. I was surprised when
conversation starters over dinner
were questions about which church
community I belonged to and
whether or not I was married. I'm
sure the non-inclusive language was
an oversight rather than intended to
exclude. And I didn't take offence
at the dinner questions, which were
asked out of a desire to connect with
me, to understand who I was and
why I was there.

But I sensed that the community
somehow needed to stick a label on
me. In fact there was a label stuck
on me, quite literally, one that
proclaimed me to be a "visitor."
I'm hoping we can find a more
welcoming label for newcomers next
year, although I am not entirely sure
why these labels are so important.

I'd suggest "And how did you come
to be here at the gathering?" as a
better question than "And where
do you go to church?" And with
relationship status, by all means ask

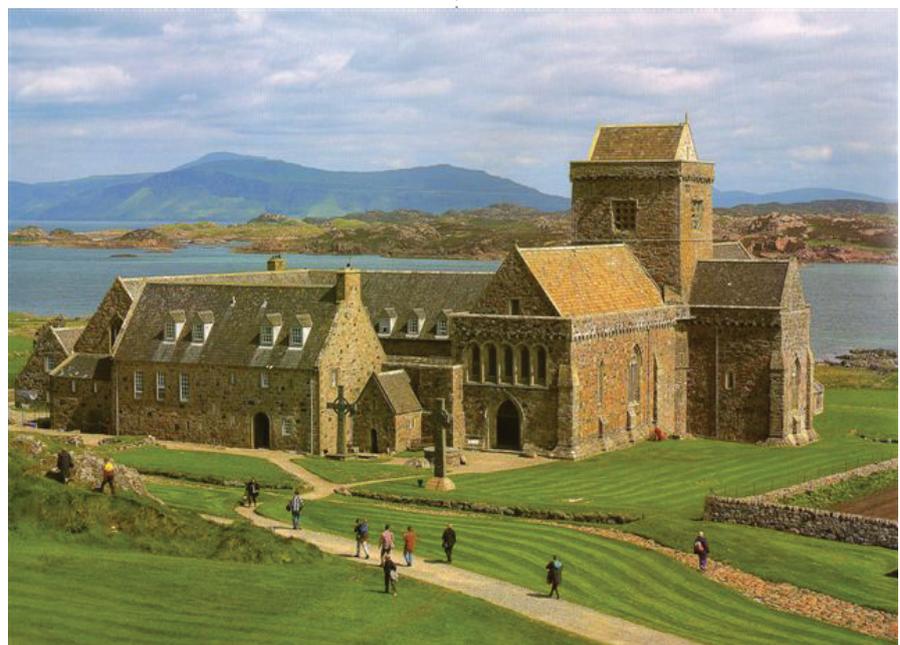
me if you must, but you will have to
excuse me if I just smile and say "it's
complicated."

I believe that the Wellspring
community can be a place of
welcome for those of us who fall
outside mainstream churches. I have
felt a strong sense of connection with
many individual Wellspringers, and
I am grateful for it. There's no-one
who more desperately needs this
community than those of us you
might call the unchurched.

The symbol of the Wellspring
Community, is perhaps at first
glimpse, a little staid. A windmill.
A functional structure, fixed to the
ground. But the blades of windmills
are designed to be moved by the wind.
And Bono, the unlikely theologian,
has this to say about the spirit:
*"God's Spirit moves through us and
the world at a pace that can never
be constricted by any one religious
paradigm. ... it says somewhere in the
scriptures that the Spirit moves like a
wind--no one knows where it's come
from or where it's going. The Spirit
is described in the Holy Scriptures
as much more anarchic than any
established religion credits."*

May the Wellspring windmill always
welcome wild winds.

Michelle Coram



Hope - Hiroshima Heart Journey

In May and June this year I visited Japan for the first time. My main aim was to visit old friends, Yoshiko and Aki, whom I'd met 30 years ago in Australia and who had become correspondents over that time at first by snail mail, and later by email.

After a time acclimatizing in Yonago, where they live, we travelled to Okayama, the rail line interspersed with green forested hills, rice paddies and fast flowing rivers. After changing at Okoyama, we headed to Hiroshima and the delta formed by the arms of the Otagawa River emptying into the sea.

Our first day in Hiroshima we attended a Rotary Servas meeting, chaired by our hostess, Toemoko, in the conference room of the International Conference Meeting Centre. We met many of the local Servas hosts who welcome people into their homes and offer hospitality to visitors and students.

After lunch, we prepared to explore the city, accompanied by a woman called Akiko Masumura, 79 years of age, so agile and energetic she left us trailing behind her in awe!

Akiko's story was one of those we heard many of, those of survivors by chance. Akiko's father had gone to do business in China in the later years of World War II and as a result she was not living in Hiroshima at the time of the bombing on August 6th, 1945. A year later, aged 17, she returned with her immediate family to Hiroshima, to a city almost completely demolished and with most of her schoolfriends and some members of her family ill or dead.

Hiroshima today is a big, bustling vibrant city, lined by bridges over the Otagawa River. At its centre is the Peace Memorial Park which contains a great number of memorials in the form of monuments, statues and

ponds. What astounded me were the trees still standing which survived the blast more than 60 years ago. In the middle of the park stands the Peace Memorial Museum, opened in August 1955, just 10 years after the blast, and continues to depict the facts and devastation of the bomb as well as educate the present Japanese generation and other international visitors on its effect.

The Museum was definitely a very chilling experience, and a very emotional one for my friend Yoshiko as well. Seeing the photos of children and adults with skin badly burnt (in some cases the whole body) and the tattered remnants of clothing, footwear and other artefacts brought home the grim reality of this terrible event.

At the same time, Akiko's intensity and enthusiasm impressed us so much. Her willingness to show us each monument, memorial and shrine in the park was amazing. She had a definite drive in trying to inform us of her story and that of many people in her memory who had died on that day and in the months following the disaster. Her drive obviously comes



Hiroshima dome

from her hope that this disaster is never repeated.

Despite all this, no-one visiting Hiroshima today can be anything but impressed by the regeneration of the land, the re-development of the city, and most of all the spirit of these survivors and their descendants, building on such small scraps of hope. How difficult it must have been to start again from scratch, to forget or at least put aside thoughts of family and friends so suddenly taken away, and rebuild their homes, their lives and move forward in hope towards the future.

It is this hope that is the most palpable feeling that pervades the city of Hiroshima and the people who live and work and fill the streets and parks and gardens once again. It is something I feel I will keep in my heart forever.

Meryllyn Tandukar

DESERT SILENCE

silence

intense

deep

pulsating with life

engulfing

penetrating

silence

impregnated

ever calling

into its depth

of life -giving

peace

silence

frightening

awe-inspiring

with mystery

of presence

desert silence

beyond the Barrier Range.

© Ruth Povey, 10 09 02

From South Australia - REFRESHING RETREATS

The South Australian Wellspring Community has found that retreat days are a very successful way of building our community. People who would not normally attend our bi monthly meetings enjoy coming to the retreat days, this includes some younger people. This year we are holding two retreat days.

On 24th May, 23 people attended this Retreat Day at Glenbarr, Strathalbyn SA led by Di Shearer and Helen Stacey. We were introduced to the day by Ruth Povey who read some of her poetry. The poems were inspired by a landscape she had painted in the NE Corner of South Australia. We were encouraged to enjoy silence and to “catch the moment.”

During the day we enjoyed visiting a number of local art galleries, informally sharing our responses and insights and talking with the artists. These discussions continued during a well catered lunch.

Helen Stacey has worked with an Aboriginal friend, learning from her. She has used her art as a vehicle for reconciliation, using aboriginal symbols, and a wire gate as a symbol of white settlement. This work was



most interesting. Di Shearer displayed her ‘Rapped in Bark’ series which is sensual and spoke through the texture and colours of tree bark ‘the skin of the tree’, an inspired series of work.

Glenbarr is a very beautiful country camp site with its old stone buildings and stone walls with beautiful trees, garden and bird life. We were encouraged to spend time wandering,



Above: Micelle Coram right enjoying lunch with Helen Stacey in the historic dining room at Glenbarr SA.

Left: Helen Stacey in her gallery, Jack and Peg Goodluck in background

looking for inspiration and “capturing a moment” for our art.

It was interesting to see people’s expression of their spirituality through art. We were given all the help we needed , working on canvas, with frames etc. to make our work look its best. A truly refreshing day.

Our second retreat day will be held at Old Noarlunga Chapel on 6th September when Kuarna Elder Lewis O’Brien will share on “Different Australian Spiritualities”.

Fiona Cockington

Wellspring Events

CELTIC PILGRIMAGE - 9th to 14th November 2008

Organized by the Beechworth Uniting Church, this Pilgrimage provides an opportunity to consider major themes of Celtic Spirituality, on a focused contemplative walk over 5 days through the north-east of Victoria, from Bright (Wandiligong) to Beechworth, following the Beechworth Celtic Festival

CONTACT: Celtic Pilgrimage, 32 Elgin Rd., Beechworth 3747 - Telephone / Fax: (03) 5728 2835

Email: dpo25858@bigpond.net.au

URBAN PILGRIMAGE - 17th to 21st October 2008

This Pilgrimage, in Western Sydney, is an ecumenical event facilitated by members of the Wellspring Community in partnership with the NSW Ecumenical Council. It will involve coming to listen, to understand many issues more fully, and to explore what Christian community means in the context of urban Australia.

CONTACT: Urban Pilgrimage, Wellspring Community Inc.,

C/- Clabon and Margaret Allen, 7/32 Chandos Street ASHFIELD NSW 2131 - Telephone: (02) 9798 4663

Email: clabon.margaret@bigpond.com

A registration form is available on the internet at www.wellspringcommunity.org.au

Book Review

Creating for Life: an artist's spiritual reflections

Col Jennings 2007 (Special limited edition published in connection with the Exhibition 'North, South and Centre' in February 2008)

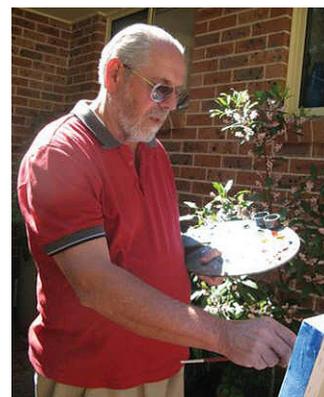
This short book is a very personal account of one man's journey through a period of mental ill-health, and the part that was played by art and by various thinkers and writers in helping him to come out the other side. It is generally accepted that many of the most creative people have similarly suffered, like Van Gogh, for example. Many face having to make the decision whether to take medication to flatten out their mood swings, with the risk of harming their creativity. The spirit of creativity works in mysterious ways. Col finds in his inspired art a way to God. He finds inspiration in, among others, the well known mystic, Meister Eckhart and in the blind/deaf Helen Keller, whose overwhelming handicaps did not prevent her being a channel of grace. He discusses the importance of art and culture through the ages and admits that he started with an idea which grew. That the result is

a bit untidy at times does not detract from value of the story of one man's pilgrimage.

The book could have been longer – he covers such a wide range that I kept feeling "tell me more about that idea".

His journey has been a wide-ranging and profound one and he has been helped on the way by many artists and writers. His journeying takes him to the Swedenborgians and the "Book of Urantia". I googled these – the former was described as "a dangerous mystical non-Christian religion. Its denial of the Trinity and the Holy Spirit, the vicarious atonement, and rejection of Acts and the Pauline epistles clearly set it outside of Christian orthodoxy."

The Urantia book touches on science-fiction and is "a momentous work consisting of 2,097 pages of material received from numerous celestial beings supposedly brought to the earth by superhuman, divine beings in 1934.... Its claim is that it is the 'finest major divine revelation since the coming of Christ to our planet'." In other words, they may be classified as outside Christian orthodoxy, but that does not diminish their potential to help people, and thus there is value in them.



Col Jennings

Tighter editing would have made it a better book, but those who know the author will appreciate the way in which he has laid bare his soul, and in so doing can be of help to others along the way.

And, of course, we cannot forget the vivid pictures – an important part of the book, and a celebration of nature in Australia in all its beauty. The reflections in the water are a significant part of them. He finishes with some words of our Scottish Wellspring friend Peter Millar:

I believe I am created in the image of God, I believe God delights in me. ... I believe God empowers me to share with others the journey to wholeness ... I believe God stands with me now. I believe God has brought me to this place.

Margaret Allen

Quest for the Spirit ... In Australian space



© Ruth Povey

No boundaries!

No restrictions!

No limitations!

Is this freedom?

Welcome invitation!

Enticing challenge!

Cautious response!

Is this moving towards the infinite God?

Wonder experienced!

Mystery embraced!

A presence discovered!

Is this the destination of the inner journey of life?

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NEXT ISSUE:

Pipeline theme for December issue is: 'Sharing our Journeys'.

Editor for this issue is Michelle Coram. Please have your material to Michelle by Friday 7th November.

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