



# Reflections

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AVONDALE  
COLLEGE  
CHRISTIAN  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION

since 1897

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*Reflections* is the magazine of the Avondale College Alumni Association for Friends of Avondale

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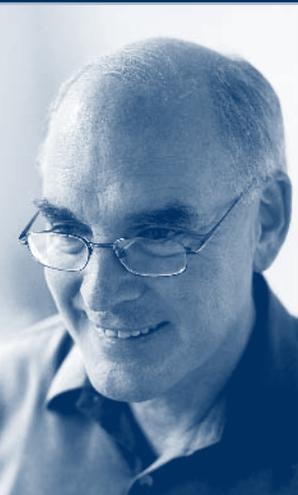
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## Christian community

### Dr Lyell Heise

Avondale College Seventh-day Adventist church was, in 1981, a community looking for a building. Twenty-five years later, it risks being a building looking for a community. This risk extends beyond this congregation to the Adventist Church and, indeed, the Christian church. However, let's use the Adventist Church to illustrate.

The church risks becoming a victim of its own success—it's growing unevenly. Most of its members live in Africa, Inter- and South America, Asia and Oceania. They are non-European, and they are young. Within a few decades, the majority of Adventists will have been born since the year 2000.

This explosive growth is attended by significant cultural change, much of which seems to be value neutral. However, I acknowledge some of my contemporaries see it as leading to the decline and decay of Christian values, and with them, Christian community. So, at the bottom line, we share this passion for community. Community is the most precious gift that comes with being a Christian.

You once were strangers, weeps the apostle, as he writes to his Greek Christian friends, but now you have come near, now you belong. Now because of the gift of Jesus, you are part of the family.

Listen! Building a sense of community, a true understanding of what it means to be a member of the family of God, is difficult. It takes earthly families a lifetime to perfect, and then we even sense some shortcomings. However, building community is so phenomenally worthwhile.

Here's a call for community builders, at this church and in every Adventist church around the world. What might this community look like?

It might look like an increasing number of fellowship groups connecting older with younger people. It might take people as willing to cross 21st century cultural borders, as did missionaries crossing geographical borders in the 1700 and 1800s. It might take younger people who sense the experience and nurture in older people. It might take Baby Boomers willing to say and say often, "The icons of this new culture . . . are like a foreign language. But I sense the passion for Jesus. That makes it imperative for me to support, and yes, participate."

And just in case we dyed-in-the-wool, Bible-believing, truth-telling Adventists are tempted to think love and acceptance are only secondary to witness, truth and Bible understanding, let's remember what Jesus said: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35, NIV).

Preaching is such a perilous thing. It's easy to pontificate, to offer high-sounding remedies and then walk away. So, what I want to do is commit again to membership in a small group, to resolve to hold my self-absorbed, Baby Boomer culture with a lighter grip, and to hear over and over from my fellow Christians about the journey I must take to understand Christian commitment in the landscape of their culture.

Difference in age and culture will continue to threaten community in this and in your church, but I have a dream that every member will be willing to look the seductive forces of evil in the eye. And when these forces say those younger people have lost the plot, when they say, it's so wearying to coexist with older people, every member will answer, "I don't believe you. My younger, my older brothers and sisters in Christ are more precious to me than life itself. You can do your worst to me, but I will never believe you, and I will never betray them. Never."

Dr Lyell Heise served as the first full-time minister at the college church (1981-1987). He preached this as a sermon during the church's 20th anniversary celebrations in March this year.



Avondale College graduation service speaker Dr Kerri-Lee Krause told graduands to carry a peg or two in their pocket. “You never know when you’ll be needing to spread that tent of yours and break new ground,” she said.

Photo by Brenton Stacey

## Avondale graduates told, “God on your side”

### Brenton Stacey

Avondale students will leave college with confidence as a strong God-on-your-side theme emerged from each of the presentations given over the graduation weekend (December 1-3).

Dr Darren Morton, speaker for the consecration service on the Lake Macquarie campus, read from the Dr Seuss book, *Oh, the places you’ll go!*. He then advised graduands not to plan their lives too far in advance. “We find the most remarkable places when . . . we allow ourselves to be directed by the breath of the living God. . . . When you feel Him blowing you a certain direction, take courage and go with it. [Then] may you be able to say, ‘Oh, the places I went!’”

Katherine Cooper told nurses on the Sydney campus how she had once cared for a frightened patient and his distressed family in a corner of the oncology ward at the San. “Knowing Jesus is by my side . . . brings me comfort and peace when I consider the incredible responsibility of having people’s lives in my care,” she said.

Pastor Ken Vogel spoke during the valedictory services of being called to Bourke in the Outback. “Many of my fellow graduates asked what I had done wrong.” He wondered, too, after meeting the mayor, who told him to leave because the town had too many Christian do-gooders. However, a year later, the mayor nominated Pastor Vogel to head a community project. “God throws out the challenge and yet always assures the outcome. . . . Step out in God’s power with an eye to conquer!”

A focus of Dr Kerri-Lee Krause’s work as a senior lecturer in higher education at the University of Melbourne is on the transition process, or what philosopher Charles Handy calls “discontinuous change.” “God specialises in preparing us and seeing us through discontinuous change,” she said during the graduation service. “[He is] a God of the unreasonable . . . a God of the seemingly impossible when it comes to new and expanding visions.”

Graduation class co-presidents Jo Darby and Adrian Mercer presented to college president Dr John Cox a framed statement commemorating the class’s commitment to Avondale’s greater vision. The statement includes a verse from the Bible, where Jesus tells the woman at the well “whoever drinks this water will never thirst” (John 4:14).

The reference to the well is significant, because the class has donated—at a cost of AUD1500 and in partnership with Asian Aid—a well in a village in Orissa, India, as its gift to the college. The well will improve the health and safety of the villagers and allow them to grow crops and own cattle. “If ever there was a generation to stand for equality, justice and the eradication of . . . poverty, it is this one,” said Mrs Darby in her speech.

Some 246 graduands were eligible to march during the service, held in the Chan Shun Auditorium on the Lake Macquarie campus. These included the first with a Master of Education (honours) degree, Bachelor of Arts degrees in visual communication, Bachelor of Theology/Bachelor of Ministry degrees and graduate diplomas in ministry and in theology.



President Dr John Cox unveils a sign promoting Avondale College's School of Aviation, which has relocated from Cooranbong to Cessnock Airports. Photo by Ann Stafford

## Avondale opens aviation school at Cessnock

**Claudia Pereira**

A seven-time Australian champion aerobatic pilot helped Avondale College celebrate the relocation of its School of Aviation from Cooranbong to Cessnock Airports on October 29.

Phil Unicomb's 10-minute flying display in a Pitts Special S2A captivated the estimated 200 people who attended. The aviation day also featured a visit from the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Service and, courtesy of the school, free, 10-minute joy flights.

A multimedia presentation about one of the school's instructors, Joshua Ferry, provided an insight into a day in the life of a pilot. "I have the best job in the world," said Mr Ferry.

Councillor Robert Bedford from Cessnock City Council welcomed the school. "I look forward to its many years ahead in the community," he said. Chief flying instructor Garry Fraser spoke highly of Cessnock and its airspace. "Just look at the scenery we get to fly over every day: lakes; beaches; cities; the Watagan Mountains and the Hunter Valley."

The school is well respected within the aviation industry. Pass rates in theory examinations are two to three times above national averages, and more than 100 former staff members and students are currently employed in airline and other flying positions—the list includes the first female Qantas captain.

## All-round excellence awarded

Braden Oliver, Luke Borgas and Janita Bond are the big academic award winners at Avondale College this year. Mr Oliver, Mr Borgas and Ms Bond each received the largest monetary award, the \$2000 Avondale Foundation Award of Excellence.

Mr Oliver also received awards of excellence in science (\$600) and secondary education (\$750). Foundation president Dr Norm Young, who presented the award, suggested because Mr Oliver had earned so much money, he should "invest it, in the foundation."

Mr Borgas, president of the Avondale Nursing Students Association, won the Sydney Adventist Hospital's Academic Excellence Award in addition to the foundation award.

Ms Bond is volunteering at Helen Hall's (1959) Eden Valley Academy in Thailand next year. She and friend Michelle Long personally approached Ms Hall about the positions—this means they are covering their own expenses. Ms Bond is also a member of a mission team to Cambodia. The award has helped cover all the costs of both trips.

# Avondale approved to offer PhDs

Avondale College now offers a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) after receiving approval from the New South Wales Department of Education and Training.

Students can choose to complete doctoral studies in denominational or Australian history, health studies, education studies, such as curriculum and pedagogy, and theology.

“This new approval for Avondale will mean that doctoral students now can consider remaining in Australia to complete their PhD research,” says Dr Vivienne Watts, vice-president for academic administration at Avondale.

Students who have completed a master’s degree or an honours degree may be admitted to candidature and applications may be accepted at any time of the year. Students may study full- or part-time, on-campus or by distance.

## RESEARCH MORE PROMINENT IN MISSION STATEMENT

The college council has approved a change to Avondale’s mission statement that will help in its quest for university status.

The statement now has a fourth point: “To conduct research and research training in targeted areas and to enhance the research-teaching nexus.”

The accreditation panel for Avondale’s PhD submission noted research had little prominence in the statement, “a fact that led them to question the seriousness of our

commitment to research,” says president Dr John Cox.

The requirements for university status as specified in the New South Wales Higher Education Guidelines include a commitment to research and research training to doctoral level, and evidence of appropriate research output by staff. The guidelines also require research to be “integral to the mission statement of the institution.”

## MORE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The quality of education offered at Avondale has been recognised again by the allocation of 66 new Commonwealth supported places for 2007.

The allocation is in addition to the 72 new places announced earlier this year and will bring Avondale’s total Commonwealth supported places to 462 (312 in teacher education and 150 in nursing).

## EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE RATES WITH GRADUATES

The educational experience at Avondale continues receiving one of the highest ratings in the country, according to the 2007 *Good universities guide*.

Avondale scores five stars in five of the six “educational experience” sub-categories, including overall experience, overall satisfaction, generic skills, quality of teaching and staff qualifications.

The “educational experience” category is an important rating because it comes from graduates and is based on a questionnaire administered by the federal government.

# Blaze destroys building

A fire on Avondale College’s Lake Macquarie campus has gutted a disused, two-storey weatherboard building built in 1923.

Eight fire brigade crews arrived at the college soon after receiving a call from men’s residence director Pastor Mark McNeill at 1.20 am on July 28. But the fire in the former Sabbath school building behind the Watson Hall chapel was already well alight. Fire fighters could not save the building but did protect those around it, including a shed used by the college for storing outdoor recreation equipment.

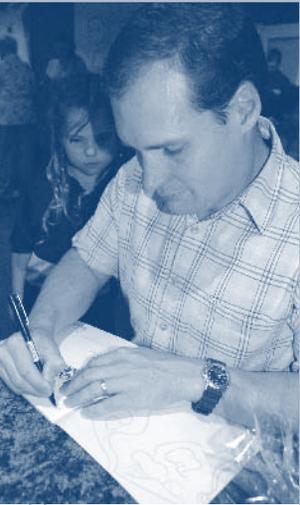
Police ruled out an electrical fault as the cause of the blaze, and they found no evidence of any occupancy. They suspect arson.

The college originally used the then single-storey building—located south of boys’ dormitory Haskell Hall—to teach woodwork. It lengthened the building in 1938 to allow for the introduction of the building construction course a year later, and it added a second storey to accommodate the Commercial Department in 1946. The college moved the building before construction of Watson Hall began in 1962.



Police suspect arson as the cause of a fire that destroyed the former Sabbath school building on Avondale College’s Lake Macquarie campus.

Photo by Ben Reuter



# Storybook's anti-smoking punch

**Stephanie Arnold**

Avondale College lecturer Brad Watson and wife Fiona feel so strongly about the anti-smoking message in Mr Watson's new children's book, *Siggly and Flori*, they funded the \$8000 project themselves. The Watsons self-published and produced a 28-page teachers resource.

Mr Watson spoke during the launch of the book in September of his grandfather Raymond's death from cancer. "The effects of smoking robbed him of the already limited life he had been left with after a long and debilitating illness," said Mr Watson. "He never got to see his children marry, never held his grandchildren. . . . [He] suffered terribly from the very thing doctors had prescribed—smoking."

Two other Avondale staff members launched books in 2006.

Theology lecturer Dr Lyell Heise and piano

teacher Valmai Hill's *Play today 2* contains 12 worship songs with arrangements for beginners and intermediates. Dr Heise coordinated the book's production in his role as director of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific's Institute of Worship.

Senior health and exercise science lecturer Dr Darren Morton wrote *Seven secrets for feeling fantastic: a proven plan for vibrant living* to "re-energise [the Adventist Church's] health message." The book, published by the church's Signs Publishing Company, explains the impact of the brain's limbic system. "I've drawn on my experience as a physiologist to illustrate not just what the secrets are, but also how and why they work," says Dr Morton. "That's an important distinction. Understanding makes a big difference."

Top left: Brad Watson signs a copy of his new children's book, **Siggly and Flori**, while his daughter Zoey-Elise looks on. Photo by Ann Stafford

# Lecturers earn new titles

Three Avondale College staff members completed doctoral studies in 2006.

Education lecturer **Malcolm Coulson** earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree through the University of Newcastle. His thesis, "Developing teachers' cognitive clarity and communication style through an in-service training program," found teachers who had a positive relationship with their students: were perceived by their students to explain themselves more clearly; helped their students achieve better academic outcomes; and transmitted values more effectively.

Theology lecturer **Pastor Lyell Heise** earned a doctorate in ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary (Pasadena, California, USA). Dr Heise produced a manual called "Training Adventist worship leaders in Australia and New Zealand," in his other role as director of the Seventh-day

Adventist Church in the South Pacific's Institute of Worship. The manual includes a history and theology of Adventist worship and reflects on the process of cultural change in the church.

**Alison Smedley** (Edith Cowan University, Perth, Western Australia) based her thesis, "Developing the nurse professional and nurse education for the 21st century," on her role as senior nursing lecturer in the Faculty of Nursing and Health. Her professional workplace portfolio included three research studies, a review of the associated literature and a published paper. Dr Smedley examined: new ways to develop curriculum; technology in nursing; policy and governance of the nursing profession; clinical learning environments; and the globalisation of nursing and nurse education.

# Searching for Swamp Mahogany

**Julie Hoey**

When Carmen Booyens told me her field research involved “hugging trees,” I was immediately interested. When I also realised it involved navigating through a swamp, nothing could keep me away. Excitement-tinted memories from my childhood days playing in the local wetlands came flooding back as I played “research assistant” instead of “pirates.”

I was most fascinated by the “waders” with which Carmen supplied me—a pair of gum boots seamlessly connected to thick plastic bib overalls, which allow you to wade through the eerie swamp without getting wet, muddy or smelly. Carmen also supplied me with gloves and a net hat to keep out the mosquitos. Combined with long sleeves, and a decent dose of Aeroguard, I felt armed and ready like an SAS trooper (or perhaps a chicken farmer, something like that). The best part of all was that we did not encounter a single leech. (And no snakes either, but I don’t mind them so much.)

My part in the action was to string out tape measures and record the data Carmen fed me as she stomped and sloshed around looking for, and measuring, *eucalyptus robusta*, or Swamp Mahogany.

The Swamp Mahogany is a winter flowering eucalypt that is an important food source for a number of threatened species, including the swift parrot that migrates from Tasmania. Carmen’s research measured the health of these trees and identified where within the wetland zones juvenile trees are most commonly found. She collected her data from several wetlands of varying sizes around

Cooranbong and Dora Creek in New South Wales.

## How “robusta” are the trees?

They’re in pretty good health, and that’s surprising considering residential development is encroaching on the catchment. On a scale of one to five, with five being dead, the trees are a two.

## Are juvenile trees anything like juvenile children?

Well, you decide. The juveniles are most commonly found in the more open and protected wet zones of the wetlands, but we also found them in the dry zone on the edge of the wetlands next to where land had been cleared—again, open space, less competition.

## And is the bigger the wetland the better?

The larger wetlands tended to have a greater range of population structure than the medium or small wetlands. So, size does seem to matter.

Carmen Booyens will study sustainable resource management for a master’s through the University of Newcastle next year. Julie Hoey is on maternity leave as personal assistant to the vice-president (academic administration).

Photo by Ann Stafford



## Restructure sees senior staff changes

Change has been the key word among members of Avondale’s advancement office as the college restructured the department.

The college council voted to bring advancement and marketing into a single structure by appointing a director of advancement—**Lorin Bradford**—with responsibility for alumni relations, fundraising, marketing, public relations and relationships with other Friends of Avondale.

Mr Bradford has led the learning and development team at Professional Advantage since 1999, providing training in information technology applications.

New marketing manager **Christina Hawkins** has worked for the Sanitarium Health Food Company for the past 11 years, serving in roles that have included senior product manager for Weet-Bix and group product manager for cereals. She established the Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon Series

and signed Australian cricketer Brett Lee and rugby union captain George Gregan.

The restructure comes after the departure of two senior staff members, **Dr Allen Steele**, the former assistant to the president (advancement), and **Glenn Roberts**, the former director of marketing services. These positions, plus that of director of development and alumni relations, formerly held by director of student services **Kevin Judge**, have not been reappointed.



## PhDs at Avondale a “double wrestle”

### Dr Arthur Patrick

It's 1951 and H Richard Niebuhr writes a book describing 2000 years of Christian history as “the double wrestle of the church with its Lord and with the cultural society with which it lives in symbiosis.”<sup>1</sup>

For Australasian Seventh-day Adventism, a chapter of this “double wrestle” began on April 28, 1897, when the Avondale School for Christian Workers opened without accreditation in an environment unfriendly to denominational tertiary education in general and the teaching of religion in particular. Subsequent chapters record long affiliations with Pacific Union College (PUC) (Angwin, California) and Andrews (Berrien Springs, Michigan) and La Sierra (Riverside, California) Universities so degrees accredited in the United States could equip employees of the church in the South Pacific.

Government recognition of Avondale College has been in process for 70 years, beginning with Victoria's acceptance of the quality of the college's teacher education in the 1930s. With W G C Murdoch as principal in 1950, Avondale began to prepare students for examinations in science offered by the University of London. Eric Magnusson, the first Bachelor of Science graduate, earned two Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees, one in Sydney, the other in London. As principal during the 1970s when Australia developed numerous

colleges of advanced education (CAEs), Dr Magnusson nurtured Avondale's status as a CAE accredited to offer a limited range of Australian diploma and bachelor degrees.

However, more than a decade of struggle lay ahead as Avondale sought and gained additional Australian accreditation to offer: Bachelor of Arts degrees in theology; Master of Arts degrees in education, health and theology; and a Master of Theology.

Currently, the affiliations with PUC and Andrews and even the distance studies from La Sierra are only memories among older ministers, teachers and Avondale staff members. Seven decades of effort by Avondale's administrators and academics has borne fruit. Avondale is recognised in the annual *Good universities guide* as producing graduates who rank with those in comparable disciplines at Australian universities. This year, 1222 Avondale students studied for awards accredited by the government of New South Wales, recognised by professional entities and the federal government.

### PHD ACCREDITATION

In August 2005, Avondale submitted to the New South Wales Department of Education and Training a document entitled “Avondale College: Doctor of Philosophy.” On March 25 this year, the church in the South Pacific's weekly news

magazine, *Record*, reported the response: approval to offer “doctoral studies in the areas of denominational or Australian history, health studies, education studies, such as curriculum and pedagogy, and theology.”

This opens remarkable opportunities for Avondale as it seeks to provide “a quality education to its constituency as well as to a growing number of students of other faith traditions who desire education in a Christian context” (*Handbook*, 2005-2006). In recent decades, the term “college” has been de-valued in Australia as more secondary schools describe themselves as colleges. Therefore, for a dozen years, Avondale has been planning for classification as a university. Enrolment has more than doubled since the early 1990s; it has increased by 15 per cent during each of the past two years. Government accreditation to offer doctoral studies can only enhance the reputation Avondale has struggled to earn in the higher education sector.

However, Avondale is a Christian institution. Christianity is a historical religion. Much of the thought of Christianity is classifiable as theology; the basic sources for theology are the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Education is a crucial endeavour within world Christianity and pedagogy is the effective conceptualisation and delivery of education. The Christian church has cherished associations with both education and health issues. All these academic disciplines have particular significance in Adventism as a movement with no creed but the Bible and a deep involvement with issues of history, education and health from the perspectives of faith.

Adventism is a small but significant segment of Christianity. The expanding discipline of religious studies forms an umbrella for the study of Christianity and its many denominational parts, such as Anglican studies, Methodist studies and Adventist studies. Adventist studies as an academic discipline embraces research in the broader background, specific history, thought, polity and practice of the Second Advent Movement. We can make effective approaches to this history from the vantage points provided by education and pedagogy, health and theology. Therefore, the approval for Avondale to offer PhD degrees in history and these other fields opens the possibility Adventists may focus more maturely on the way the Lord has led and taught us since 1844.<sup>2</sup>

## THE POSITIVES

Adventist leaders and institutions have, at great expense, developed and maintained libraries and specialised resource centres that facilitate the effective study of Adventism by higher degree candidates. In Europe, the United States and the South Pacific, Adventists have successfully defended doctoral dissertations relating to Adventism and subsequently demonstrated their commitment to the church during years of sterling service and effective publishing.

Beyond that, the most voluminous writer among the three Adventist co-founders declared truth has nothing to lose from the closest investigation. Ellen White also bluntly says truth can always afford to be fair. She is responsible for the status of Loma Linda University (California, USA) as an accredited institution that draws students from accredited tertiary institutions that attract students from accredited secondary schools. Adventism must not flinch at the demand for evidence that sustains faith, or parry the challenge of the post-modern world for meaning.

Adventist education in the South Pacific now has the option of accredited pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education—up to and including doctoral studies. This is a plus for the mission of a church dedicated to offering good news to every person, including those who cherish higher education and the skills it confers. Avondale’s *Handbook* states the mission of the college is “to deliver quality education . . . in the context of Seventh-day Adventist world view, values, faith and lifestyle.” With accreditation of PhD degrees, Avondale begins in 2006 a new phase of “the double wrestle” that is endemic to Christianity as a religion that seeks faithfulness to its Lord and effectiveness in its world.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 *Christ and culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), xi.
- 2 The allusion to Ellen White’s memorable aphorism is intended. Those who want a more extended statement of how Avondale conceives Adventist studies, developed in the context of the approval to offer PhD degrees, may keep pace with the profiles emerging on the Avondale website, [www.avondale.edu.au](http://www.avondale.edu.au).

Dr Arthur Patrick is an honorary senior research fellow at Avondale College.



# Homecomers challenged to leave legacy

Julie Stefani (1976) and Arthur Patrick (1956) cut during vespers a cake to celebrate 25 years of Homecoming.

Photo by Ann Stafford

## Brenton Stacey

Avondale College alumni looked back at the past and then into the future during the 25th anniversary of Homecoming this past August (25-27).

Dr Charles Scriven, president of Kettering College of Medical Arts (Ohio, USA), set the tone for the weekend during the Murdoch Lecture on Friday. He spoke of the “Adventist way” as a “matter of being and of becoming.” “You take up a journey and the practice of hope becomes more and more authentic,” he declared.

Dr Scriven proposed, in the light of how Seventh-day Adventism grew in depth of mission and in awareness of divine grace, a re-wording of the 1861 expression of the Adventist way. His proposal embraces what the church learned in experiences such as the church’s General Conference of 1888 and from its continued study of Scripture: “Thanks to the grace and peace of Christ, we join together in keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus: we help one another flourish, and we dare to change the world.”

Avondale Student and Faculty Association president Braden Blyde based his address during vespers Friday evening on a passage from Paul (Philippians 1:6) that speaks of God continuing to work through us until the Second Coming. “This is pretty mind blowing stuff,” he said. “Not only does this begin to blur the lines between life and death—for our God sustains our life’s work even when we have passed away—but it has powerful ramifications for how we live our lives.”

Vespers included a live telephone interview between Dr Arthur Patrick, a graduate of one of the Homecoming honour years (1956), and Dr James Cox, a former college president who

established Homecoming in 1981 (see “Meet the academic’s academic,” page 12). Dr Cox lives now in California, USA, and woke at 3 am to speak with Dr Patrick. Senior music lecturer Dr Robb Dennis had earlier invited former members of the Avondale Singers to join the choir on stage to sing one of the choir’s signature songs, Karen Thrift’s (1977) “Who is this Man?”

The Avondale College Alumni Association presented its highest award to Dr Cox during the worship service the following day. Current president and namesake Dr John Cox received the Outstanding Alumni award on behalf of Dr Cox. The award recognises Dr Cox’s commitment to further education.

Each of the Homecoming honour years also honoured a class representative. Receiving citations this year were Geoffrey Rosenhain (1936), a former head of the college’s Teacher Training Department, Wynstan Dowling (1946), Harold Halliday (1956), Gweneth Berkel (1966), Colin Raethel (1976), Tony Robinson (1981), George Buckley (1986) and Royce McMurtrie (1996).

Members of the alumni association also re-elected Pastor Roger Nixon as president, during the association’s annual general meeting.

The Promise provided support for the Sydney Male Choir during the Homecoming concert on Saturday evening. The vocal ensemble’s 30-minute set consisted mostly of an uninterrupted sequence of songs from the musical, *Les Misérables*. The male choir, conducted by Alan Thrift, who served for more than 30 years as head of music at Avondale, received two encores. The first ended with Cy Colman and Dorothy Fields’s “Rhythm of life,” an apt example of the energy and enthusiasm of the choir members—with Dr Arthur Patrick

# Scriven: Adventism “a journey of transformation”

## Dr Arthur Patrick

Christian hope is a paradox: it's so bad out there, we can never fix it; it's so good out there, it will be fixed," Dr Charles Scriven declared at the climax of four lectures on the theme, "Being and becoming Adventist."

The lectures were part of the Adventist Studies series, presented annually by Avondale College and the college church since 2002.

Dr Scriven opened the series with "The story behind the story," the narrative of Scripture. "Against his age's negativism, Abraham embraced hope; even in this life, even on this earth, a non-conforming community could be, thanks to God's covenant of peace, a blessing."

Jesus gave a radical reinterpretation of the heritage of Abraham: God's compassion reaches out to all; forgiveness can touch even our enemies; the stranglehold of violence can be broken—and by the resurrection God made Him both Lord and Messiah.

Such stories make a bigger difference than propositions, according to Dr Scriven. He presented Adventism as shaped by the picture of Christ's return, familiar with disappointment, enriched by the Sabbath. We "focus on the practice of hope: how you live when you live by the light of the returning Christ."

At the end of each lecture, Dr Scriven posed three major questions and invited others from the audience. Thus the presentations were an ongoing conversation between speaker and hearers, focused on Adventism as "a journey of transformation."

Dr Scriven's wife, Dr Rebekah Wang Scriven, a medical doctor and noted author, gave lectures entitled "Living God's grace" and "Hurry-worry sickness: is there a cure?"

The message of the series was well pointed in remarks by Dr Charles Scriven: "I want to help us get as simple an affirmation of our faith as possible. God has given us a mission of trust. Jesus is coming back to where He was wounded in the house of His friends. We have an identity that matters; a mission that matters."



Adventist Studies speaker Dr Charles Scriven explored Adventism as "a journey of transformation."

Photo by Ann Stafford

## Spiritual, mental health key to social change

### Clansi Roy

Retelling the story of faith from Abraham to the Christian church in 20 minutes is a challenge, but Dr Charles Scriven showed in his first lecture of the 2006 Adventist Studies series it could be done. He presented stories of God's interaction with man in such an exciting way it left members of the audience feeling exhausted and exhilarated.

Dr Scriven continued in his later lectures to inject fresh insights into the responsibility of Christians to make peace, speak comfort and share hope while leaving the world better than they found it.

Dr Rebekah Wang Scriven's first lecture served more as a workshop. There was laughter, and tears, as members

of the audience grappled with the challenges of living out grace to their families and communities. Her second lecture emphasised the need to possess mental and emotional health to enjoy our physical health.

Dr Charles Scriven's lectures on the Bible and the community of faith and Dr Rebekah Wang Scriven's lectures on the relationships that hold the community together and the wellbeing of the individuals in that community seem to belong in separate series. However, together, they were much more powerful. Only when we are spiritually and mentally well ourselves are we fully able to engage in making the world better than we found it.

Clansi Roy graduated with distinction from the Bachelor of Theology/Bachelor of Ministry course this year.



## Meet the academic's academic

Avondale's alumni association honoured a former college president as its outstanding alumni during Homecoming this year. The award, presented to Dr James Cox, is for commitment to further education, and for service in education to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in general, and Avondale in particular.

The transmission in the early Christian church of the teachings of Jesus Christ and the stories of His life fascinates Dr Cox. His three-volume doctoral dissertation, which earned a distinction from Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA), is a testament to this.

Interest in the history of the Mediterranean world has led Dr Cox to explore the caves carved into the cliffs on the eastern and western edges of the Nile valley in Egypt, and in studying some of the documents—The Gospels of Thomas and Judas, for example—that have been found in them.

Dr Cox remembers returning to the Sinai Peninsula to study inscriptions in a rock used by pilgrims from Jerusalem to Mount Sinai as a rest stop on their journeys. Dr Cox served as the annual professor at the William Foxwell Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, Israel, at the time (1977). When he arrived, he found a group of Arab men building, at the government's request, a fence around the rock to keep tourists from destroying the inscriptions. They invited him to stay, built a fire and cooked a pot of vegetable

soup. When night came, they transferred the fire and the soup into the centre of their tent. "After we had eaten, we stretched out like the spokes of a wheel with our feet to the dying embers while we listened to the news in Arabic and then, out of courtesy to me, in English."

Dr Cox graduated from Avondale in 1946. His time at the college increased his desire to further his education and showed him that doing so was "entirely possible." Bachelor and master's degrees in arts from Walla Walla College (Washington, USA) and Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA) followed nine years of local church ministry in Tasmania and North New Zealand. He accepted the first of two calls to Columbia Union College (Takoma Park, Maryland, USA) in 1958, serving as chair of the Department of Religion in his final three years. For the next 15 years, he served at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews as a professor of Greek and New Testament.

Then came the call to serve as president of Avondale (1980-1984). Dr Cox returned to Columbia where he served in his final three years as vice-president for academic administration. He retired in 1997 after serving for five years as chair of the Division of Arts and Sciences at Florida Hospital College of Health and Sciences.

Dr Cox married Yvonne Alice Cameron in 1948 and enjoyed 56 years as her husband. The couple had one child, John, now a professional photographer and digital artist living in Florida. Mrs Cox died in 2004, and Dr Cox has since married one of his wife's friends, Ruth Meyers. Mrs Cox and Ms Meyers met at Avondale in 1945 and kept in regular contact until Mrs Cox's death. Dr and the new Mrs Cox live in Roseville, California, USA.

## Alumni notes

**Boris Ambrus** (DipAv, 2005), one of the flying instructors at Avondale College's School of Aviation, married **Grace Banks** (BA geography, 2006) on October 8 at Newbold College in England, where Mr Ambrus began his tertiary education. The wedding reception took place in Michigan, USA, where Miss Banks's parents live.

**Rox and Joy Bowers** (teaching, 1949), now retired, live in Gatton, Queensland. They welcome visits from other graduates of 1949. Email roxbowers@hotmail.com.

**Dr Sidney Cole** died from cancer on April 2. Dr Cole was instrumental in the development of health foods, food microbiology research and quality control technologies. He began working at the Australasian Food Research Laboratories while a student at Avondale in the 1960s. In May 1967, he was appointed director and soon after completed his Doctor of Philosophy in biotechnology at the University of Newcastle. During his term as director, he initiated the construction of the laboratories as they currently stand on the Avondale estate. Dr Cole is survived by his wife of 45 years, Yvonne, two daughters and four grandchildren.

# Classroom dedicated in memory of William Wilson

## Brenton Stacey

The refurbished Business Studies 10 classroom on Avondale College's Lake Macquarie campus has a new name—the William Wilson Classroom.

Mr Wilson (1907-1987) had a close relationship with Avondale for almost all his adult life. He graduated (accountancy) in 1931 and rose quickly to management level at the Sanitarium Health Food Company.

Following service in Sydney and New Zealand, he became manager of the Cooranbong factory, a position he held for almost 30 years. During this time, he provided employment for about 2000 Avondale students, taught first aid classes, served on the boards of the college and the college church and was an honorary faculty member.

His community service included election for several terms as an alderman of the then Lake Macquarie Shire Council, chair of the Shortland County Council (electricity supply to Newcastle district), life governor of the Royal Newcastle Hospital and charter member of the Morisset Rotary Club.

Mr Wilson worked hard enough while studying to pay his fees and send money home. "He never forgot what it was like to be a student," said son Dr Don Wilson during the dedication ceremony.

Dr Keith Howson, dean of the Faculty of Business and Information Technology, spoke of his more than 25-year friendship with Dr Wilson and his father's "lasting contribution to this community."

Senior lecturer Dr Norm Carlsen offered the dedication prayer, noting the room's use for explaining debits and credits and pursuing wealth-generating activities. "Today, we have been made aware of more important issues exemplified by the Wilson family, issues of generosity, service and sacrifice. . . . May these higher values be demonstrated to, and received by, each student who comes under our care here."



Dr Don Wilson and second-year marketing and management major Holly O'Grady hold William Wilson's biography. Ms O'Grady officially opened the refurbished Business Studies 10 classroom by placing the biography on the wall.

Photo by Ann Stafford

**Dr Merle Cozens** (BEd primary, 1963) has been appointed as Avondale's seventh honorary senior research fellow. Dr Cozens is a former senior lecturer and course coordinator in the Faculty of Education. She studied literacy education for her Doctor of Philosophy and has continued to publish in this area.

**Dr Keith Howson**, dean of Avondale's Faculty of Business and Information Technology, features in a slick recruitment DVD for the Institute of Internal Auditors. Dr Howson represents the Australian body on the institute's academic relations committee. His message is simple: "You don't have to be an accountant to be an auditor. We need people with an eclectic background to deal with a

range of issues in a range of places."

The oldest living member of the alumni association, **Laura (Petersen) Kent**, celebrated her 107th birthday in 2006.

**Dr Fleur (Hillier) Llewelyn** (DipAppSc nursing, 1991) graduated with a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in October last year. Her thesis: "Health and production processes—issues, similarities and difference."

**Dr Trevor** (theology, 1952) and **Ellen Lloyd** have moved into an over-55s retirement community near Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park at North Turrumurra in Sydney.

Continued p14



## Alumni notes contd.

Samoa Adventist College principal **Urima Malaga** (pictured, top left), 40, complained of chest pains after playing a game of volleyball during the post-graduate Winter School on July 9. He died from a heart attack later in the evening. Mr Malaga is survived by his wife of 21 years, Atalina, and three daughters, Grace (16), Charity (12) and Graityna (two months).

**Dr Edmund Siagian** (BEd secondary, 1962), now retired, is a former education director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Southeast Asia

Union Mission (1991-1999) and adjunct professor at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines (2001-2003). He is now giving private tuition to primary and secondary students and conducting extension school programs in Sabah, Malaysia, for Mission College (Muak Lek, Thailand).

**Cheryl Sonter**, lecturer in home economics and design and technology at Avondale, will marry Paul Reineke of Wentworth Falls on December 10 this year.

**Dr Ernest Steed** (theology, 1944), now retired in DeBary, Florida, USA, but a former temperance director and a special assistant to the president of

# Historic clock comes full circle

## Melody Tan

A desk clock brought to Australia in 1891 by Seventh-day Adventist Church founder Ellen White has returned to Cooranbong.

The clock—manufactured by Welch, Spring and Company and patented on March 17, 1868—belonged originally to Mrs White's husband, James. He died in 1881. Mrs White gave the clock to Robert Conley in 1900 before returning to the United States after her nine years as a missionary in Australia.

Mr Conley plastered almost every original building on Avondale College's Lake Macquarie campus. He also plastered "Sunnyside," the Cooranbong home of Mrs White and now a museum depicting her life in Australia. "We feel happy to present this clock to the church," says granddaughter Sheila Dever. "It's something tangible to remember the Whites by."

Mr Conley gave the clock to his son, J B, the first non-Adventist to enrol at Avondale. J B joined the church through baptism before graduating from Avondale's ministerial course in 1919. He became a prominent evangelist in the South Pacific. Pastor Conley gave the clock to his son, Wallace, who died two years ago.

Rose-lee Power, curator of the Lake Macquarie campus-based Adventist Heritage Centre, says the delight at receiving the clock does not just stem from the historical significance it has to the church. "Few of these clocks come on the market or are even seen publicly," she says. "We have in our hands a piece of treasure. It is a well-preserved clock that still works despite its age."

The clock is currently on display in the Ellen G White/SDA Research Centre, which is also on Avondale's Lake Macquarie campus. It will soon be on permanent display at "Sunnyside."

### ADVENTIST HERITAGE SIGNIFICANT

The Adventist Heritage Centre is one of only two groups in the Hunter region of New South Wales to

receive a federal grant to help preserve its collections.

Minister for the arts and sport Rod Kemp announced the \$6490 grant, at the National Library of Australia in Canberra on November 8. The grant will fund a significance assessment and preservation survey.

"We're using the money to independently assess our collections to establish our national significance and prioritise our preservation activities," says Ms Power.

The centre, which opened in 1977, houses more than 2000 document boxes, each consisting of Adventist Church records, diaries, notes, personal letters, publications and other miscellaneous items, and more than 3000 audio recordings and books. Its collections are growing at 35 linear metres a year, providing fertile research for anyone interested in the work and lives of past Adventists in the South Pacific.



Adventist Heritage Centre curator Rose-lee Power and Ellen G White/SDA Research Centre director Pastor John Skrzypaszek (1987) with a clock brought to Australia by Ellen White.

Photo by Ann Stafford

the worldwide Adventist Church, has helped build a new AUD1.5 million complex for the church he planted in 1998. The church now has 76 members.

Former assistant to the president (advancement) at Avondale, **Dr Allen Steele**, and his wife, assistant clinical coordinator **Andrea Steele** (pictured, bottom left), have received a Bridge Award from the Adventist Church's Communication Department for "pioneering and inspirational work fulfilling God's mission through Adventist radio broadcasting" and "skills in corporate communication, writing and public relations." The Steeles served Adventist World Radio from its inception in 1971 until 1976, then from 1985 until their move to Avondale. Dr Steele served primarily as vice-president for strategic planning, Mrs Steele as director of public relations.

## Foundation announces record profit

The Avondale Foundation has announced a record profit of more than AUD750,000 this year.

Treasurer Chris Akroyd made the announcement during his report to delegates at the foundation's annual general meeting (AGM) on October 22. The profit is from the combined businesses—including owning half of the biggest producer of macadamia oil in Australia, the largest propagation nursery in New South Wales and an investment company with more than AUD60 million in depositors' funds—the foundation runs, a good result considering the effect the drought has had on the nursery. Mr Akroyd expressed confidence the foundation would achieve its goal of AUD5 million in equity within the next two years.

President Dr Norm Young thanked all the foundation's employees and volunteers for helping achieve the record profit. He also noted the foundation had contributed over its 28-year history more than AUD6 million to Avondale College. The president of the college, Dr John Cox, tendered requests during the meeting for a further AUD305,000, AUD55,000 for research by staff members, AUD150,000 for Academic Excellence Scholarships and AUD500,000 over five years for extensions to Andre and Watson Halls.

"Now, Dr Cox, you often go cap in hand to governments and to [church administrators] and frequently come away with a lot less than you asked for," said Dr Young during his speech at Avondale's graduation service on December 3. "You must have been surprised, then, when the foundation again said yes. For once you got everything you requested." In response, Dr Cox said he was not surprised because of his past experience of the foundation's generosity to the college.

Delegates at the AGM voted two new members—Stuart Tipple, principal of Gosford-based law firm Brennan Tipple Partners, and Dr Norm Carlsen, senior finance and information technology lecturer at Avondale College—to the ACF Investments Ltd's board. Dr Carlsen will also serve as chair of Avondale Foundation Ltd.

Avondale Foundation president Dr Norm Young presents to Avondale College president Dr John Cox a cheque for AUD305,000.

Photo by Brenton Stacey



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# Heritage Walk

Engrave your name in stone\*



\* Help preserve our heritage

## The heritage walk

The Avondale College Alumni Association launched its heritage walk at Homecoming in 1999 to raise money for restoration and repair work on the Lake Macquarie campus. The walk between Bethel and College Halls features black granite pavers etched with the names of members of the association. The first paver bears the name of the oldest living member, Laura Kent, who celebrated her 107th birthday this year.

## The cost

Members of the association are invited to make a \$175 tax-deductible donation to the college to have their names etched on the pavers.

## The how-to

Contact the Advancement Office (+61 2 4980 2252, [advancement@avondale.edu.au](mailto:advancement@avondale.edu.au)) to add your name to the heritage walk.

# Alumni Association