



This conference is supported by the
Division of Pacific and Asian History in the
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies,
Australian National University.

**First TransTasman Conference on
*Australian and New Zealand Missionaries,
At Home and Abroad***

**Coombs Extension Lecture Theatre
Australian National University
8-10 October, 2004**

PROGRAM

The conference seeks to encourage academic research and writing on the contribution of Australians and New Zealanders to Missionary Enterprises in New Zealand, Australia, and overseas in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

FRIDAY 8 OCTOBER 2004

0830 Registration in LOBBY OF NEW COOMBS EXTENSION LECTURE THEATRE
SEE MAP

0900 Official Welcome and Conference Opening

0915-1000

Dr Stuart Piggin, Macquarie University, Sydney

Australia and the Missionary Movement/

ABSTRACT: Evangelicals were significant players in the settlement of Australia with an elaborate missionary vision and the motivation to seize opportunities to 'gospelise' the world, including the Pacific. This paper locates the origins of the Australian Protestant missionary movement within the vision which Jonathan Edwards had for Terra Australis and Hollandia Nova, the growing confidence eighteenth-century evangelicals had in the gospel as the engine for the renovation of the world, and their understanding of Australia as a strategic base for missions to the Pacific. The reality was a long struggle to establish missions before the rebirth of the missionary movement in the 1880s.

1000-1045

Ms Jessie Mitchell, Australian National University, Canberra

"Can These Dry Bones Live?" Conversion and Worship on Aboriginal Missions and Protectorate Stations, 1830-1850

ABSTRACT: During the 1830s and 1840s, Aboriginal people in south-eastern Australia experienced devastating dispossession and poverty, but also a brief surge of enthusiastic humanitarianism, as Protestant Missions and the Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate were established at the prompting of evangelical lobby groups. Historians have tended to dismiss these early missions as financial and spiritual failures, lacking committed Aboriginal converts. This paper considers the complex and subtle ways religious dialogue and ceremony shaped early relationships between missionaries and Aboriginal people. I will examine the common participation of Aboriginal 'heathens' in Christian worship and discussion. Consideration will be given to the few Aboriginal individuals who embraced Christianity. The paper will also refer to clashes between Christian and indigenous spirituality.

1045-1100

Ms Rosalind Gooden, ex-Director of Global Interaction, (formerly Australian Baptist Missionary Society), Adelaide

The Five Barley Loaves

ABSTRACT: Not men but five young women became the icon for Australian Baptist missions in India. In the farewell address to them in the Flinders Street Baptist Church, Adelaide in 1885, Silas Mead preached on the story of the loaves and fishes, and applied it by "what are so few (these women), among so many" The paper will look at women's contribution to the initiating overseas involvement of colonial Australasian Baptist missionary societies

1100-1130 Morning Tea

1130—1215

Rev Dr Charles Rue, Columban Missionary Institute, Sydney

The Columban Fathers in Australia

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the establishment period of the Columban Society in Australia and New Zealand, 1920-24. The focus is not the Society's overseas work but its work locally. The character of the Columban Society was clerical and rooted in a diocesan base. It used its Irish Catholic church connections to create nation-wide insertion into local Catholic dioceses. It went on to make definable contributions to the theory and practice of mission through organisation, the training of missionaries, and opening local Catholics to a new image of Asia issues and new concepts of mission. Historical sources on the local Columban story are limited to brief references in published books and my doctoral thesis.

1215-1300

Mr Peter Carolane, University of Melbourne.

The 'experiential' evangelistic methods of John Bulmer with the Kurnai/Gunai people at Lake Tyers in the 1860s.

ABSTRACT: At the intersection of postcolonialism and missiology, mission history can explore some of the ways colonial culture effects the strategies and motives of nineteenth century British evangelical missionaries. This paper uses the mission work of John Bulmer to the Kurnai/Gunai people at Lake Tyers in the 1860s as a case study to explore this intersection and to compare and contrast two major evangelism strategies in colonial mission: experiential evangelism and cognitive evangelism. Findings indicate that Bulmer, a lay missionary sent by the Anglican diocese of Melbourne, was influenced by his Methodist heritage and was therefore inclined towards experiential evangelism rather than the cognitive evangelism favoured by Calvinist missionaries. Further, the egalitarian philosophy of Methodism gave Bulmer a progressive appreciation of Indigenous culture. As a result, Bulmer's mission work was 'successful' in regards to the Evangelical agenda, and perhaps meets a postcolonial critique.

1300—1415 *lunch*

1415-1500

Bill Edwards, University of South Australia

A Moravian Mission in Australia: Ebenezer through Ernabella Eyes.

ABSTRACT: The Moravian Church which played a major role in the Protestant missionary movement was involved in Aboriginal Missions in Australia from 1850 to 1919. This paper outlines their work at Ebenezer Mission in the Wimmera region of Victoria from 1859 to 1904. This venture provided a model and encouraged other church bodies to commence Aboriginal mission. This paper examines the influence of the Moravian tradition on their work at Ebenezer, describes some of the daily events of the work, outlines problems they encountered and comments on the Moravian's relationship with the Aboriginal people. The unique contribution I bring to this study arises from my own involvement in Aboriginal missions for a period of twenty years. As I have read reports of Ebenezer I have been constantly reminded of events and incidents from my own experience at Ernabella mission a century later. Although so much changed over this period, so much seems to have remained the same. Thus the paper is subtitled, Ebenezer through Ernabella eyes.

1500-1545

Dr Cathy Ross, Bible College of New Zealand

CMS Missionary Wives in 19th Century NZ: Separate Spheres or Shared Dominions?

ABSTRACT: The language and ideology around separate spheres, public versus private and the cult of the domestic is currently under debate with various interpretations of the exact meaning of separate spheres. 'The angel in the house' phenomenon is a feature of 19th century British evangelicalism and forms part of this separate spheres ideology. However, separate spheres is an ambiguous phenomenon within evangelicalism precisely because evangelical theology justified women's involvement in social reform and philanthropy as 'angels out of the house.' This paper will explore some of the issues and ambiguities in this debate to try to establish if and how far this ideology not only shaped the lives of 19th century CMS missionary wives to New Zealand but also just how separate male and female spheres were in practice. The paper will consider the lives and work of Elizabeth Colenso and Catherine Hadfield to see how far they conformed to the 'separate spheres' analysis – whether they inhabited separate spheres from their husbands or whether they lived and worked in shared dominions.

1545-1615 *afternoon tea*

1615-1700

Dr Janet Crawford, University of Auckland

'Unpretending labors": Julia Farr and the Melanesian Mission.

ABSTRACT: Julia Coleridge Farr, daughter of a prominent Anglican family in Adelaide, was a missionary with the Melanesian Mission on Norfolk Island in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Her letters and diaries give a lively description of life and work at the Mission in this period, particularly among the women and girls who came from the islands to be trained as "Christian wives". They also provide valuable insights into some of the difficulties and frustrations experienced by Miss Farr, a single woman in a community where most of the missionaries were unmarried men and the few wives were largely occupied with their own children. Unlike these wives, Miss Farr was a missionary by choice but though she was committed to this work she gave it up because as an unmarried daughter she was thought it her duty to nurse her elderly father when he became ill. After leaving the Mission she continued to correspond with a number of the mission staff.

SATURDAY 9 OCTOBER 2004

0900-0945

Dr Allan Davidson, University of Auckland

Charles Elliot Fox and the Melanesian Mission

ABSTRACT: Charles Elliot Fox (1878-1977) was educated in New Zealand and joined the Melanesian Mission in 1902. He identified closely with the local people becoming for a time a member of the indigenous order, the Melanesian Brotherhood. He was one of several outstanding anthropologist/missionaries produced by the Mission who sought to understand the peoples and their cultures. W.H. Rivers regarded his manuscript for *The Threshold of the Pacific* "as one of the most important, if not *the* most important, piece of field-work that has ever been done in social anthropology". The paper will place Fox within the Melanesian Mission context and evaluate his contribution as a missionary, teacher, scholar and author.

0945-1030

Associate Professor Peggy Brock, Edith Cowan University, Perth

Cultures in Contact: First generation Christian evangelists.

ABSTRACT: This paper, based on the writings of new Christian evangelists, considers their attitudes towards Christianity and the people they wished to convert. These evangelists, among the first generation of Christians, went on to spread this newly introduced religion within their own and other indigenous communities. By focusing on their role in the dissemination of Christianity, I emphasize the interaction of local cultures and values with the European Christianity introduced by missionaries from Europe and the neo-Europes of Australia and north America.

1030-1100 Morning Tea

1100-1145

Ms Christine Brett, Latrobe University, Melbourne

Missionary stories: The women of the Aborigines Inland Mission 1905-1920

Abstract: We begin with the ninth AGM of the Aborigines Inland Mission (the AIM) in Newcastle, NSW on 12 August 1914. Seated on the dais were Retta Dixon Long, the Director of the AIM, Jennie Smith, Matron of the Singleton Home and missionaries, Margaret Acland and Margaret Bagnall. Beside them were senior Aboriginal people including Alex Russell, the AIM's 'native helper', Charlotte and Billy Ridgeway of Karuah, and Charles Golden from La Perouse. The AIM, directed by Retta Dixon-Long seceded from the NSW Aborigines Mission in 1905. The AIM differed from missions like Warangesda in NSW or indeed, the Aborigines Protection Association. Missionaries gathered Aboriginal people into communities and raised funds by public subscription and government subsidy. Instead, the AIM followed practices established by the China Inland Mission in the 1870s. Missionaries lived by faith: God would provide all temporal needs. Single women, whose stories I tell, were chosen for their capacity to live alone, inland, within Aboriginal communities. While they had scant regard for Aboriginal culture, they contributed much to the latter's self-confidence in negotiations with European culture, and challenged contemporary discourse. Ultimately missionaries were no match for a ruthless government whose practices moved from philanthropy to control by 1920.

1145—1230

Ms Yvonne Wilkie, Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, Archives. Dunedin

“Delving Deeper: Archives in the Mission-Secular Interface.”

ABSTRACT: John Mott once stated “it is a Christian – that is a missionary’s – obligation to collect, preserve, protect the available data (on missions and the expansion of the Church) so that when the ‘younger churches’ begin to be interested in their own pre-history this documentation is available.” Demands by academic and religious researchers from first and third world countries for access to missionary archives and documentation has both grown and broaden in recent decades. The increased awareness among the ‘indigenous mission churches’ of the need to gather the memories of their people, the alerting of smaller missionary societies to the needs of archive management and archive preservation sees many organisations collating and digitising inventories. When searching for documentation and location of missionary archives in Australasia and the Pacific we are found wanting. I will consider the implications of developing a missionary collection within a New Zealand context.

1230–1345 Lunch

1345-1430

Dr Darrell Paproth, Bible College of Victoria, Melbourne.

Hussey Burgh Macartney Jr: The key figure in nineteenth century missionary outreach.

ABSTRACT: The aim of this paper is to assess the seminal contribution and significance of Hussey Burgh Macartney Jr to missions in the latter part of the nineteenth century. More specifically it focuses on the 1890s; a decade which not only saw a great depression which demoralised the colony of Victoria but which was also one of most creative decades in Australia history. Hussey Burgh Macartney Senior (1799-1894) was a Church of Ireland clergyman who arrived in Melbourne in 1848 as one of Bishop Charles Perry's party. Macartney Jr came to Melbourne with his father. In 1857 he went to his father's alma mater, Trinity College Dublin. He was ordained by Perry in 1867. He served as vicar of St Mary's Caulfield for almost 30 years. He resigned in 1898 to become Home Secretary of the Bible Society in England. He died in 1908 in Darjeeling, North India. I will refer briefly to the context of his ministry, outline his contribution to missions, discuss the things that motivated him, and assess Macartney's contribution and significance, and the nature, strength and vitality of the Melbourne evangelicals at that time.

1430-1515

Mr Syd Gould, University of Queensland, Brisbane

“Dano aba, a cross-culturally sensitive missionary: the contribution of Alan Sinclair to the evangelization of the Huli people in Papua New Guinea, and the development of an ‘indigenous’ church”

ABSTRACT: New Zealander Alan Sinclair went to the Highlands of Papua New Guinea in the early 1950s with the then Unevangelized Fields Mission to serve amongst the Huli people, one of more than 800 a socio-linguistic groups in that country. Along with his wife, Val, he learnt the Huli language, ‘gossipped the Gospel’, taught, translated the Scriptures, and spent his life unstintingly in the service of the Huli people. This paper outlines the life of this missionary and his contribution to the missionary task, and offers a ‘model’ for missionaries engaged in cross-cultural mission.

1515–1545

Afternoon tea

1545-1630

Mr Ian Duckham, University of Western Australia, Perth

WESTERN DESERT MISSIONARIES, THEIR COLLABORATORS AND CRITICS: ASSESSMENTS OF PROTESTANT INSTITUTIONAL MISSION WORK IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S WESTERN DESERT 1921-1973

ABSTRACT: Fifty years of institutional mission activity on the seven Protestant missions in Western Australia's Western Desert converted few Aborigines. The harsh, isolated environment, unremitting toil and realities of unresponsive children and adults made mission work a real challenge for even the most dedicated. During most of this period white communities fringing the Western Desert had a hostile attitude toward Aboriginal people, wanting them kept out of sight and out of mind. Pastoralists who profited from their (cheap) labour were antagonistic toward missionaries who sought to improve the lot of Aboriginal people. Missionaries struggled to balance government expectations to 'feed, clothe... and generally care for... inmates', on minimal funding, and their constituency's expectation of conversions. So, why, in the face of such criticism, stress and privation would missionaries want to 'swim against the tide' by ministering to such marginalized and despised people? What impelled missionaries to sign up for Aboriginal missions in lieu of the call of exotic overseas locations that the church constituency supported so enthusiastically? What motivated them to stay?

1630—1715

Dr Gwenda Baker, Monash University, Melbourne

'Only Teachers, Nurses and Wives': Women On Methodist Missions in Arnhem Land 1916-1970.

ABSTRACT: This paper locates women missionaries within mission structures and mission history on the twentieth century Australian Methodist missions in Arnhem Land. Male mission leaders and missionaries referred to the work and lives of women on Methodist missions in Arnhem Land in pejorative terms, reflecting the gender hierarchy operating on the missions. They failed to acknowledge the large participation rate of women in mission activities, and the importance of women's roles. By the nature of their desire to serve, their reluctance to complain and the overall patriarchal operation of the church, women had little impact on mission administration. Their contribution and impact on mission functions and Aboriginal lives, however, was significant. Long-term teachers and nursing sisters in particular helped establish the credibility of the mission in the eyes of indigenous people. The operation of the education and health systems both strengthened the mission's hold on the people and contributed to the weakening of Aboriginal systems and structures. Women missionaries were conscious of the contradictions implicit in their roles and are ambivalent about their place in mission history.

1900-2100

CONFERENCE Dinner.

UNIVERSITY HOUSE, CANBERRA

SUNDAY 10 OCTOBER 2004

'0900-0945

Dr John Stenhouse, University of Otago, Dunedin

Missions, Race and Colonialism: Hadfield, Te Ati Awa, and the New Zealand Wars 1860-1872

ABSTRACT: Octavius Hadfield, CMS missionary at Otaki-Waikanae north of Wellington, launched a fierce attack on government policy at the outbreak of the New Zealand wars of the 1860s. His controversial defence of Maori rights has attracted historians' attention ever since. Yet Hadfield's feelings, motives, ideas and intentions remain surprisingly obscure. Embracing Erik Wolfe's conception of empire as 'bundles of relationships,' I argue that Maori had a profound impact on Hadfield, converting the missionary to a deep, affectionate, and ethnographically enlightened—though never uncritical—respect for Maori people and culture. Yet other dimensions of Hadfield's character—his paternalism, authoritarianism, and highly conservative Anglican religiosity—deserve no less emphasis, however uncongenial these may be to modern liberal sensibilities. I conclude this case study with a brief appreciation and critique of recent interpretations of missions and colonialism by historians such as Susan Thorne, Jean and John Comaroff, and Catherine Hall. the 19th century.

0945-1030

Dr Marita Bardenhagen, University of Tasmania

Missionaries at War

ABSTRACT: In 1939 on Cape Barren Island two single women lived in an isolated community of some 160 Aboriginals and a few white administrators. One was a Missionary for God, Miss Ada Hudson, from the Bethel Peniel Mission. The other was a Missionary of Progressivism, Bush Nurse Helen Davies. Living at different ends of a single building, these two women with much in common were unable to work together. The conflict between them created considerable difficulty at least for Sister Davies. This paper explores the impact of colonialism and racism on the small island population of Cape Barren Island through the activities of two tireless workers who attempted to "improve the lot" of the Aboriginals through their "good works". Although the island itself, as a half-caste reserve, was an expression of institutionalised racism and cultural hegemony many of the Islanders remember kindly the ministrations of these two independent women.

1030–1100 Morning Tea

1100—1145

Ms Amanda Barry, University of Melbourne

Teaching civilisation: early missionary educational attempts amongst South-East Australian Indigenous Peoples

ABSTRACT: My research has focussed on missionary and state archives to construct a history of European (mostly missionary) attempts to educate Indigenous peoples during the period of early contact in the nineteenth century. This paper will outline the results of my research so far. I will begin with an examination of Indigenous forms of education and learning pre-contact, and then move to the very early attempts to educate natives, which formed a central plank to the settler process. The final section of my paper will trace later, more institutionalised forms of education which emerged in all three colonies (New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia) later in the nineteenth century, and which were eventually taken over by colonial education departments. I hope to provide an insight into the interaction between Indigenous and missionary groups generally as well as a more detailed examination of specific examples in the early colonies. By focussing on the educative element clearly present in the missionary task, I hope to uncover earlier attempts to assimilate Indigenous peoples into the culture of their invaders and subsequent links to the stolen generations.

1145-1230

Dr Hugh Morrison, Independent Scholar, New Zealand.

'Australian Influences on New Zealand's Emerging Protestant Missionary Movement, 1885-1922'

ABSTRACT: By the 1920s a formalised, sophisticated, articulated and well-supported foreign missions movement was a central feature of New Zealand church life. Upwards of 736 men and women had departed overseas as missionaries by 1930, engaged by a wide range of denominational and nondenominational missions. A further significant number of Protestant churchgoers participated as supporters of foreign missions at home. This was an important feature of the emerging identity of New Zealand Christianity in the late colonial period. At the same time, however, it was part and parcel of the wider so-called modern missionary movement that emanated from Western nations in the same period. Therefore it was shaped as much by external factors as it was by factors more intrinsic to New Zealand's location and context. This paper will examine this latter contention, with reference to the ways in which Australian churches and Christianity influenced the development of New Zealand's missionary movement. It argues that Australia was an important source of inspiration, missionary initiatives and training. In turn Australia formed one corner of a well-travelled triangle connecting the two colonies (later dominions) with missionary destinations worldwide. The paper will focus on three representative elements of this relationship: Australian influences on the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society; recruitment of New Zealanders by the Australian based Poona and Indian Village Mission; and the Australian based training of missionaries for the New Zealand Church Missionary Association. In turn this discussion will be set within the wider historical and historiographical context of the relationship between New Zealand and Australia. On the one hand it suggests that the intimate relationship between the two countries, as witnessed in the missionary movement, carried on well past Federation in 1901. On the other hand it will suggest that the development of New Zealand based lay training options for missionaries, in the early to mid-1920s, significantly altered the ongoing nature of this relationship.

1230–1345 Lunch

1345-1430

Ms Meredith Lake, University of Sydney

The Australian Council of Churches and the Asian Context.

ABSTRACT: During the 1950s, the Australian Council of Churches (ACC) directed an increasing amount of attention to Christians and churches in the Asia Pacific region – with profound consequences for its members' perceptions of their location in the world and their Christian responsibilities as Australians, and particularly their understanding of Christian mission. In my paper, I'll examine the ACC general secretary's goodwill visit to Indonesia in 1950 and the participation of Australian delegates in the East Asian Christian Conference a few years later. In so doing, I'll explore how the ACC's growing recognition of its 'Asian context' and its developing relationship with a newly independent Asia provoked the re-conceptualisation of the spiritual condition of Australia's population and the re-fashioning of its missionary task both domestically and in the nations of the 'near north'. My paper is part of a larger project dealing with Australian Christians' changing perceptions of place and its impact on how they thought about and lived out the Christian life.

1430-1515

Ms Felicity Jensz, University of Melbourne

The Gamble of God.

ABSTRACT: My paper will look at the reasons why the Moravian Church decided to send missionaries out to Australia when they did. It will look in detail at relationships between Germany and England at the time as well as the impression both had of each other (and Australia). Sending out Moravian missionaries to Australia was quite literally a gamble. My paper will explain why.

1515-1600

Mr Jeff Brownrigg, Screensound Australia, Canberra

Documenting Missions: Australian Film and Sound Records After 1896.

ABSTRACT: From time to time since the last decade of the 19th century the activities of missionaries in Australasia and the Pacific have been registered using audiovisual media. Often these have been a significant part of ethnographic documentation. Sometimes they have been straightforward news and at others, a part of the private records of family members of those who have conducted missions. The earliest surviving ethnographic films (1898) seem to have been shot by a university research team in the Torres Strait, but soon after this cameras were being pointed at lives and customs of mainland and islander peoples in the region. As well as conventional actuality footage, there are numbers of Australian feature films in which missionary activities are portrayed. In addition to the more or less continuous film record (much of which has not survived) the work of missions was frequently documented using other available audiovisual technology. Wire recorders, for example, captured singing in New Guinea in the 1940s before the arrival of cheap and readily available audiotape. Missionary groups, until quite recently, used ingenious mechanisms to convey Bible stories in minority languages. There is much to explore. Using illustrations from the whole period (1896 to the present) this paper will explore Australia's national collection of sounds and moving images.

1600-1700

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1700 conference close