

## INSIDE – *Passing the baton!*

**2,000 new students** are settling into St John's University of Tanzania this month.

Neville & Elspeth Carr report that many students are dependent on government loans or sponsorship. 1,000 are training to be secondary school teachers, and there are 35 new theology students. Your gifts have been turned into a desperately needed and strategic collection of theological books for the University library.



*SJUT librarian (Mr Wamili) with some of his staff unpacking books from Australia.*



*Two men commencing theological studies at St John's University of Tanzania.*

## EGYPT

Alexandria School of Theology currently grants a four year theology degree, but is preparing to offer an MA degree with assistance from Australian theological lecturers. So more theological books in English are required.

Because there are two campuses – Alexandria and Cairo – two copies of many texts are needed. Hence the \$10,000 grant mentioned in our previous edition. This is a strategic opportunity and your participation is encouraged.

# Is there room for a Latin American publisher?

**Able led by Beatriz Buono, Certeza Argentina has become the most successful Protestant Spanish-language book publisher based in Latin America. Yet, publishing Christian books in Latin America is very challenging.**

Beatriz says...

"When was the last time you read a book written by a Latin American Christian? When was the last time you read a book by an Australian Christian? As in Australia, the vast majority of books sold in Latin American Christian bookshops are imported. Overwhelmed by this avalanche of Christian books from the United States and Spain we inevitably ask ourselves whether there is a need for a publisher based in Latin America. Why add to the range of books that already exist and that are being published daily? If others have the resources and promotional machinery to service the pastors and leaders of the churches of the entire world, how can we possibly compete? Why bother?"

Is there a niche for a Latin American publisher? Yes, of course! We are uniquely qualified to identify the people who are most effectively serving the church and society in our countries and evaluate their contribution. Our challenge is to encourage them to write about their experience of God's grace and share their testimony with the broadest possible audience. While our catalogue features translations of classic works written in English by authors such as John Stott and John White, our best-selling books are written by Latin American authors such as Lucas Leys, German and Daniela Ortiz, Adrian Intrieri, Elba Somoza, Silvia Chaves, Daniel Gonzalez; all writers nurtured and published for the first time by Certeza Argentina.

## What will be our distinctive contribution to the Kingdom?

Publishers located in economically unstable countries need to define very carefully what to publish and what not to publish. We aim to offer quality books based on a serious reading of the Bible and of the Latin American reality. We seek to promote group reflection, with wholistic application and serve youth, students, leaders, pastors and churches wherever Spanish is spoken. We want to be known as a publisher of books that are Biblical, practical, simple, interactive and 'anointed'.

Our distinctive focus is serving and inspiring adolescents and youth with titles such as 'Rebels with a Cause' (discipleship), 'God also chooses donkeys' (healthy self-esteem) and 'The love of my life: Who will it be?' (courtship!). We also contribute with Bible studies and discipling and pastoral aids such as the 'Certeza devotional Bible studies' and 'Healing family relationships'.

## Vision as a beacon

While we must analyze and understand our context, we are, above all, called to see it through God's eyes. If God decided to adopt a people in Latin America, then without doubt he expects us, as part of his people, to contribute to the church's written testimony. While we rejoice in the number of Latin American authors recognized by United States-based publishers, and give thanks to God for this opportunity to serve, there is still much that can and should be done in our corner of God's kingdom. Communicating the lordship of Jesus Christ in all areas of life, right where we are. This is our calling. This is our vision. This is our work."



## You can hear Beatriz speak this January

**New South Wales.** Monday, 5th January, 11.15 am.

CMS New South Wales Summer School, Katoomba. <http://www.cms.org.au/branch/>  
Go NSW, CMS Summer School 2009

**South Australia.** Thursday 15th January, 9.15 am.

CMS South Australia Summer Encounter, Victor Harbour. <http://www.cms.org.au/branch/>  
Go SA/NT, Summer Encounter Conference 2009

**Tasmania.** Saturday 17th January.

CMS Tasmania Summer Conference, Camp Banksia, Port Sorrell. <http://www.cms.org.au/branch/>  
Go Tas, SummerView 2009

**Victoria.** Monday 19th January, 11.15 am.

CMS Victoria Summer Under The Son conference. Philip Island Adventure Resort:  
[http://cyc.org.au/piar/location\\_map](http://cyc.org.au/piar/location_map). Day-visitors can register on arrival.  
<http://www.summerundertheson.org>

## PASSING THE BATON



I am delighted to be hard at work; handing the Society's administration to my successor.

Our National Council was unanimous and thankful to God in its recent decision to appoint Michael Collie as National Secretary from January 2009. He is working with me now as we transfer the office from Adelaide – its home for the past 17 years – to Michael's home town of Melbourne.

Michael and Elspeth have worked in Christian publishing in Argentina for the past 16 years under the auspices of CMS so, it's highly appropriate that his Commissioning Service will be held on Monday 19th January from 11.15am in the context of CMS-Victoria's "Summer Under the Son" convention at Phillip Island. It's a great conference, and its excellent children's and youth programme means you can make a day of it as we celebrate God's goodness. Please join us!

Consulting work with Christian publishers in Australia, Argentina, Egypt, India, Peru, Philippines & UK has been one of the many gratifying aspects of my service with the Society (especially when there were good outcomes!). And I have been moved and humbled to acknowledge generous gifts – whether small or large in monetary value – from you and from people and churches around the nation.

However, the deepest satisfaction has been receiving on your behalf the appreciation and the expressions of gratitude to God, from those whom we've been able to help and encourage in advancing Jesus' Kingdom.



You have given me a great privilege.

THANK YOU!

Len Woodley

## Tying the knot – Michael Collie explains...

**When two mountaineers tie themselves together with a rope, they enter into a pact. For better or worse, they agree to share a common but unknown fate. While often done with indifference or bravado it remains an act of profound trust and intimacy.**

**Tying the knot is to say 'yes' to adventure.**

It was 1980. I was twenty-four years old and about to graduate with a degree in graphic design. But already my mind was elsewhere. A chance meeting in a snow-bound hut while ski touring on Victoria's Bogong High Plains had brought together an unlikely trio: the entrepreneur, the lawyer and the graphic designer.

Together we were preparing to hatch Wild magazine, a quarterly celebration of Australia's wild places. Our energy was boundless and our passion infectious. We could not fail.

The first issue hit the newsagents the following winter. I was safe at last. Safe from any uncomfortable demands God might make. I mean, who ever heard of a graphic designer being called to be a missionary? My job fitted me like a glove. All my passions rolled into one: bushwalking, climbing, design. And, I was being paid! Perfect. A dream come true. So soon?

Perhaps that is why after five years I felt restless. Am I where I am most needed? Is that all there is?

Magnanimous to a fault, I declared to God: 'Take me. I'm all yours.'

A year later I was disappointed to find myself at the same desk performing the same tasks. A slow learner it seems. It took me 12 months to realise that a rudder cannot steer a stationary ship. Okay. I get it. I have to make a move. It took me another six months to pluck up the courage to announce to my partners I was going to bail. I then gave a year's notice and proceeded to train my successor.

Now what? I decided to go wild. I put my belongings into storage and went hunting and gathering with Aboriginal friends in an outstation community in western Arnhem Land. This was vocational reconnaissance. However, I was offered welfare jobs with little continuity with my experience and applied for community development work for which I was unqualified.

A friend persuaded me to visit mutual acquaintances, medical missionaries, in Asia. While in Thailand I helped to amputate the leg of a landmine victim. It seemed that whatever my experience and skills there was a greater need for them outside Australia.

In Nepal we were welcomed into the home of Michael and Debbie Langford, Australian Church Missionary Society doctors running a United Mission to Nepal hospital at Okhaldunga in the Himalayan foothills. There was a CMS magazine on the table. I picked it up and it fell open at a page recruiting a graphic designer with publishing experience to work with a Latin American Christian book publisher. Trumpets? Lightning? Not quite. Clarity? Yes. Blinding. Inescapable. This is what I was waiting for.

I took the rope and began forming a figure-of-eight.

I flew into Melbourne one evening and fronted up at the CMS office the following morning. That's me! It's mine! That's my job. Not so fast. First I needed a year's Bible study, another year's missionary training, not to mention a wife! Undeterred, I joined the other first year students at Ridley College four days into first term.

A letter soon arrived from CMS advising that the Bible study and missionary training were still prerequisites but that they had checked with Buenos Aires and a wife was optional. I was off the hook.

I am easily distracted and completing my year at Ridley proved challenging. In September that year I met Elspeth. She was working at the Inter Serve office having recently returned from six months in Delhi exploring development and ministry opportunities in a TEAR-sponsored program and later working as a volunteer in a community health program in the mountains of northern India. We married the following year.

Elspeth and I arrived in Buenos Aires on 1 April, 1992, at the invitation of Certeza, the literature ministry of ABUA, the Argentine IFES-affiliated student movement. As the only non-Argentines there, our goal was to work ourselves out of a job. We dreamt of one day leaving Certeza in a state of economic self-sufficiency.

Not so fast! Fifteen years, two daughters and industrial quantities of laughter, sweat and tears later Certeza Bible commentaries, study guides and discipling materials are sold wherever Spanish is spoken. More importantly revenue generated by book sales pays the salaries of the Argentines who do what we went to do. And much more besides.

We understood that it was necessary for us to leave Certeza so that others might occupy our place. This has been as painful as it is gratifying but we leave Certeza in capable hands.

This was the adventure that God wanted for us and all we had to do was say 'yes'. While we knew that we had done all we could for Certeza we were not so sure that we should leave Argentina. We left trusting that we were being brought to Australia for a purpose.

We left Buenos Aires on a Sunday evening. At church earlier that same day our Argentine pastor prayed for us and his words have sustained us as we resettle in Melbourne. 'For sixteen years we have been preparing you for missionary service in Australia. Go now with our blessing.'

Give me the rope.



Elspeth, Kate, Lucy and Michael Collie

## Calling young writers

It is exciting to see how effectively the new award for young writers is stimulating budding writers and leading to publication. Only in its 3rd year, this project needs much wider community awareness. You can Help! It is not too early for you to alert your under 30 friends (the closet writers) about the 2009 Young Australian Christian Writers Award.



It's our way of discovering and encouraging the Australian Christian writers of the future. Please pass the enclosed brochure to a potential entrant or post it on your church notice board.

The brochure is also available from [www.spcka.org.au](http://www.spcka.org.au)

## ...and theologians (young or older!)

Many fine theological works by Australian writers end up being published overseas. If you are (or know) a writer of theological works, please read the details of the Australian Christian Theological Writers Award and consider an entry. Or pass the brochure to a theology lecturer who may be unaware of the award.

The enclosed brochure is also available from [www.spcka.org.au](http://www.spcka.org.au)

Gifts can be made electronically to, SPCK Australia BSB 085-005 Account Number 51-670-1561  
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