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RISE people

Out of the Water and Still Making Ripples



RISE Magazine talks to Duncan Armstrong about how faith is shaping his life out of the pool. Story by Wendy Rush

How do you start a conversation with a gold medal winning Olympian? One of an elite group of Australians who have

achieved what most of us never will, or never even have dreamed of attempting? Someone who has reached the dizzy heights of success in their field and the fame and celebrity that goes along with it? I couldn't help but ask – what did it feel like? That moment in 1988 at the Seoul Olympics when Duncan touched the wall and knew that it represented a world record broken, a gold medal 'in the bag'?

Duncan responded quickly and easily – it was clear it was a moment that he has reflected on many times over the years, and a moment that has, quite understandably, stayed etched into his mind and his heart.

"For me, to touch the wall was a tremendous relief", he replied. "But it was also a huge cauldron of emotions. Along with the relief after all the hard work, there was elation. But there was also anger and fury. I showed you all! I showed the doubters. "Pride comes later when you have a chance to reflect on your achievement. But at the time it is quite surreal because it was something I had dreamt about and worked towards for so long."

At 20 years old, Duncan had spent 7 years swimming fulltime, and 5 of those years really dedicated to his dream of Olympic gold. It meant a life focused on early morning and late night training sessions, absorbing all his energy and leaving not a lot of energy for other things. It meant falling asleep at school, not going to parties like others his age. But Duncan says it didn't feel like a sacrifice. "I was travelling overseas, I was one of only 36 Australians chosen to compete. The group of people at the pool were my friends. I never felt that I wasn't where I was supposed to be. I wanted to be the greatest swimmer in the world and I wanted to be famous."

But then what? After the world records, the gold medal, the

international acclaim – what then? When Duncan retired from swimming, how did he start to build a new life out of the pool?

Duncan admits that after the swimming ended he discovered a void. It is something that is common to top line professionals whose career, through choice or circumstance, comes to a sudden halt. There is a need to find something to replace it, but you know full well you will be going to the bottom of the ladder and virtually starting over. It can be terribly confronting.

Duncan questions whether he was fortunate or unfortunate in being able to slip easily into a media role, because the same values that drive competitive sport at an elite level also drive the media industry - ego, fame and fortune. "I did find that things I thought were important, weren't actually important. The values and beliefs I learnt in the pool were not sustainable in life.

"You find that there is an empty hole you can't fill – no matter how hard you try. You keep searching for something the world can't give you."

In his search, Duncan looked to someone he describes as "a good Christian bloke". He saw in him a hidden strength and asked him about it. Duncan was told that that the source of this strength was Jesus Christ. "After I stopped laughing, I tried it out and found he was right."

Duncan says there was not any one thing, but rather a series of events, that led him to Jesus Christ. The fact that he was able to follow a "good Christian" helped immeasurably.

"People who walk the walk will always have more impact than people who talk the talk."

How was his decision to follow Christ received by those who knew him, who had spent time in and around the pool with him? Duncan admits there was a lot of scepticism. "All my life my attitude had been antagonistic, even toxic. Behind the facade of success, people can be just as broken as anyone else and that's where I was at. Even after becoming a Christian it took me a long time to work through and it was a confronting time for everyone who knew me. It was a tumultuous time, but I have become a lot friendlier."

For someone who spent a large part of his life working towards a major goal, what is it that he is aiming to achieve now?

In response, Duncan talks more about balance and behaviours than goals. And he mentions more than once that he wants

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to read and get to know the Bible more. "I just want to follow Jesus. I don't want to set goals, I want to develop a set of behaviours to display that are around relationship, forgiveness and understanding – in the world this is a very hard thing to do. I am still learning what it's all about and still getting into The Book. I find that if I include Jesus in my decisions things will be pretty right.

"I want to be a great Dad and a great husband. And if I can do all that, then my life is assured. I enjoy helping people up to the level to where they want to be at and it is a privilege to work with motivated charities and motivated people, and ultimately

playing a part in changing people's lives." He might be out of the pool, but Duncan is far from being a fish out of water. As he directs his gold-winning energy and zest for life into the lives of others, the ripple effect is evident.

DUNCAN'S BIO

Duncan Armstrong rose to national and international fame at the Seoul Olympics in 1988 when he broke the world record to win the Gold Medal in the 200 metres freestyle. He formed a winning relationship with coach Laurie Lawrence which spanned 10 years, collecting Gold at the Commonwealth Games, Pan Pacific Championships and numerous national and international competitions.

During his stellar career Duncan also won a host of honours out of the water, including Young Australian of the Year and an Order of Australia Medal. After representing Australia at two Olympic Games, Duncan retired from the pool in 1993 to pursue a career in media and corporate coaching.

1989 Order of Australia Medal

1989 Young Australian of the Year

1988 World Record Holder 200m Men's Freestyle

1988 Gold Medal – 200m Men's Freestyle Olympic Games – Seoul, Korea

1988 Silver Medal – 400m Men's Freestyle Olympic Games – Seoul, Korea

1986 Gold Medal – 200m Men's Freestyle Commonwealth Games – Edinburgh, Scotland

1986 Gold Medal – 400m Men's Freestyle Commonwealth Games – Edinburgh, Scotland

*Read more about Duncan at
www.duncanarmstrong.com.*

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Freedom or honour. Which would you choose?

Rosanne Hawke teaches Creative Writing at Tabor Adelaide, an accredited tertiary institution with a Christian perspective. Her latest novel has just been released by HarperCollins.

Seventeen year old Ameera Hassan has just finished school and her friendship

with Tariq, her best friend's older brother, is growing. But when her Pakistani father hears of it, he sends Ameera to stay with his family in Azad Kashmir to attend her cousin Jamila's wedding. It takes her less than a week to realise the devastating truth – the intended marriage is not Jamila's but her own! Ameera has a tough decision to make: will she choose freedom or honour?

Marrying Ameera is a new novel for young adults by Rosanne Hawke which explores forbidden love between cultures. The idea for the novel came about while Rosanne was in Pakistan on an Asialink Literature Fellowship. She heard about a man in the British embassy who directed the Forced Marriage Unit in Islamabad where they rescue 130 British-Pakistani brides or grooms each year. It happens in our country too. Recently a Lebanese-Australian girl rang the Australian Federal Police for help because she was being sent overseas to marry without her consent. Rosanne says "For me, writing is a way of talking, a way of interacting with the world and making sense of what I hear and see. Sooner or later what I experience becomes assimilated into my work, and although that happened with what I saw in Pakistan, Marrying Ameera is a work of fiction.

Arranged marriages work very well for three quarters of the world, but forced marriages are against the law here and in Pakistan."

Rosanne lived in Pakistan for seven years, and in the United Arab Emirates for over two years, visiting a few other places in between. During that time she worked as acting principal of a girls' boarding school – an Urdu medium school - which she describes as a challenge. But she says the most fun she had in Pakistan was as a house parent in an international boarding school. It was in Pakistan that Rosanne began to write.

"I couldn't find enough things for my kids to read", she says "so I used to tell them lots of stories. One night when my eldest daughter was home from boarding school I told her a story and she asked me to write it down for her birthday. When her birthday came she wanted me to type it up for Christmas."

Although Rosanne's books are published mainstream, her Christian worldview permeates her body of work. She says "I believe a beautiful book will tell the truth and give hope to the hearts of young readers." She has a passion to see students improve their writing skills and believes the arts are important in sharing stories with others so we can gain an understanding of people who may have different cultures from our own.

"God is an artist; creativity and language are a reflection of His image. I would like to see churches embrace the arts and nurture artists in their congregations, for the arts shape culture."

Rosanne Hawke is a multi-award winning Australian author. She has written sixteen books for young people, among them *Mustara*, which was shortlisted in the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards in 2007, and *Soraya the Storyteller*, which was shortlisted in the Children's Book Council of Australia Awards in 2005 and the South Australian Festival Awards in 2006. Rosanne was awarded an Asialink Fellowship to write in Pakistan in 2006 and a Carclew Fellowship in 2008. She has been an aid worker with TEAM in Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates. She recently received a Tabor Adelaide Award for Teaching Excellence.

Find out more about Rosanne and her books at www.rosannehawke.com.

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smart living

Putting Your Mind to it



Business coach and entrepreneur Manuel Karkafiris points out that we choose success by choosing to think positively.

"Whether you think you can, or you think you can't-- you're right." — Henry Ford.

Have you ever jumped out of bed and knocked your toe only to watch your day spiral downwards from that point with one frustrating event after another?

We've all had those days but the good news is you have the power to change this course of events and it's all in your mind.

Our mind is a powerful organ and if we use it right, the results can be amazing.

It's called positive focus, or positive mindset. It simply involves consciously changing your focus to look for greatness in the things that we see and do, and this often involves looking for opportunities when things are looking bad.

SOL Results Director and founder Manuel Karkafiris said developing a positive mindset is a practice, just like creating any conditioned habit.

"I have seen people's lives turn around because they begin to focus on the good things in their life rather than the negative in every situation," Manuel said.

"What we focus on is what we get and what we feel. Therefore, if we focus on the things we need to make a situation better, we will find a way."

To start developing a positive mindset:

Begin asking 'how' and 'what' instead of 'why is this happening to me'. For example, ask 'what can I learn from this?' or 'how can I make this better right now?'. The questions you ask yourself can shift your focus rapidly.

Review your belief systems, especially those about yourself. To build a strong belief about yourself look back at times when you achieved great things and you will learn that even in tough times you always manage well.

Look at the emotions you are feeling most of the time. Positive emotions, such as love, happiness, peace and joy – tell us that we are in the place we want to be. Negative emotions – anger, fear, sadness and hurt – tell us we need to work on areas of our life to turn things around.

Focus on what you want and where you want to go. Make visualising your goals a habit first thing in the morning and last thing at night and take action to bring these goals into your life.

Read books, listen to CDs and attend seminars/workshops about Personal and Professional development and you will discover that you will be able to use your mind to its potential.

Write a list of everything you are grateful for in your life. For example, I am grateful for my family, my friends, my career etc.

Ensure the people you spend time with have a positive attitude and have achieved more than you in life because it is only then that we can learn and condition new behaviours, beliefs and attitudes.

"The reality is that the people you hang around are who we become, whether that is our parents, teachers, family and friends," Manuel said.

"Choose your peers with care, and if there is someone in your life who is negative, realise that you cannot change that person but you can be a positive influence. So be yourself, remain positive and unconsciously you may inspire them to increase their positivity. If the person remains negative, it is important to still love or like the person however you need to be aware of not allowing them to influence your thinking or mindset.

While having a positive attitude at all times may seem a little unrealistic, Manuel says there will still be days when you feel challenged by any number of situations.

"The key here is that you have a choice," he said. "You can either choose to have a bad day, in which case you probably will, or you can choose to have a bad moment. This means you can shift quickly back into a positive emotional state, which in turn will shift you into positive thinking."

To shift your focus in these situations slow your breath and take deep long breaths, go for a brisk walk if possible, or listen to empowering music.

Manuel said life isn't about putting up with the hand you've been dealt.

"If this were true Oprah Winfrey would still be living in the ghetto and not as a billionaire. There may be evidence around

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Putting Your Mind to it (continued)

us that shows we are having a tough time but it doesn't mean we have to 'live' there. It pays to focus on how to move forward – in other words, focus on where you want to be and not where you are and you will be amazed how your life will positively transform."

Manuel Karkafiris is a Director of SOL Results. He is a sought after Master Coach, Business Entrepreneur and Internationally Certified NLP Trainer. He can be contacted on manuel@solresults.com or www.solinstitute.net

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CBMC Business Growth Groups: Grow personally, grow your business, grow in good company



Our work environment is often challenging and pressure-packed with so many things competing for our attention. Time is a precious commodity and always seems to be in short supply. We are taught that we are fully self sufficient

– but it is only through the support and encouragement of a few people who are on the same journey we are on that we can be most effective and fulfilled. That's why CBMC Business Growth Groups were established.

Through Business Growth Groups, CBMC serves the business community in South Australia, and being part of a group is open to anyone who is involved in the marketplace.

What is a Business Growth Group?

- A CBMC Business Growth Group consists of four to six people involved in the marketplace in some way (business, education or government) and a facilitator, who meet every month to discuss and learn new strategies to solve important issues.
- Business Growth Groups offer:
 - Counsel** – shared wisdom, giftedness and experience of like-minded people based on sound values and ethics
 - Be Accountable** – gaining the courage to follow through on tough decisions and issues as they arise
 - Mutual Support** – receiving and giving understanding, empathy and encouragement
 - Confidentiality** – gaining trust and confidence in one another that comes with honesty and transparency in a confidential environment
 - Business Tools** – resources, training and networking opportunities
 - Gain Skills** – to more effectively interact interpersonally in the marketplace
 - Grow** – personally, spiritually and professionally.
- Each group determines its own meeting times – breakfast,

evening, weekend or whatever suits. The duration of the meeting is usually 1.5 to 2 hours and is structured along the following lines:

- » Welcome and personal sharing time
- » Report on accountability task carried out over the previous month
- » Discussion of this month's resource
- » Setting of accountability task(s) for the coming month.
- CBMC provides the resources, mentoring and the system to establish and run Business Growth Groups in conjunction with Churches, organisations, businesses and groups of individuals.
- Groups use Dr John C Maxwell's audio series 'Maximum Impact' – a monthly mentoring program (participants are responsible for the cost of all resources they use, approx \$200 pa).

To join a CBMC Business Growth Group or to find out more contact us at bgg@cbmcint.com.au or telephone 08 8396 6111.

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Inside Out

Give Your Life a Spring Clean



As the cold gives way to the warmth of Spring we get the urge to open our doors and windows and sweep out the cobwebs and clutter of Winter. Life coach Carey Hauri invites us to do the same with our lives.

In our busy, demanding

daily lives, there is often little time left for rest, reflection and refreshment. The result? We feel tired, drained, stressed and anxious. Our spiritual, physical and mental health may also begin to suffer. Giving our lives a spring clean can help us get some perspective on our lives, evaluate what is happening, and help us to de-clutter, simplify and re-focus our lives for greater enjoyment and effectiveness in living God's purposes. A first step to giving our lives a spring clean is to take time for solitude, which means taking a break from the business of daily living and spending it in quietness so that we can rest, reflect, evaluate, refuel and refocus. Times of solitude or personal retreat can be among the most radical, vital and life-changing moments of our lives. The ideal would be to take three days/two nights and to get away somewhere alone. If that isn't possible, aim to take at least a one day retreat. Make sure you are away from phone, TV, e-mail and responsibilities, and switch your mobile to silent and put it somewhere you can't see it! If possible, go somewhere where you can enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

Rest

Start your spring clean with a good sleep! Sleep-in or have that much-needed nap. Slow down. Release all burdens and responsibilities by writing down your most pressing tasks and responsibilities on a "dump sheet". Pray through the list and commit it to God. Put the list away, out of sight and mind for the remainder of the retreat. Enjoy some recreation. Read a novel, ride a bike, take a walk, play some golf, draw, paint, play your guitar, write.

Reflect and Evaluate

Asking God to give you insight, honestly review the past few months and reflect on the different areas of your life (personal spiritual life, relationships, church/community, work/career, finances, personal/professional development, health and

fitness), your roles and goals, your life purpose and vision, your weekly schedule and commitments,. Write down your thoughts, conclusions and questions in a journal. Ask yourself:

How am I doing in my relationship with God? What am I learning about God?

How am I doing in my personal life? (Spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally.) What am I learning about myself?

How am I doing in my relationship with others? (Family, friends, co-workers, church, community, neighbours.) What am I learning about relationships?

How am I using my gifts, skills and abilities to make a difference in people's lives, in the world?

How am I doing in my work? (Review your position description, work roles and goals.)

Refuel

Take time to feed your mind, heart and spirit, and to respond to God. Read or listen to large chunks of Scripture. Listen to a music CD. Sit or walk and soak in God's creation, climb a hill, walk along the beach, look at the stars - ponder the Creator. Study resources that stretch your thinking regarding key areas of your life (marriage, family life, leadership, vision, purpose). Meditate on some of the key promises of God.

Refocus

Talk with God about the different areas of your life asking him to show you his best for each area and the next step forward. Take time to listen and hear from God. Review your life purpose and vision, roles and goals, weekly schedule and commitments.

Ten questions to help focus your life for the rest of your life!

Prayerfully consider the following questions to help you clarify priorities and issues in your life:

1. What is my single greatest strength and how do I maximise it?
2. What are the three things I can't decide on, or are overwhelming me at the moment?
3. What is the single thing that if I could just solve that, all else would flow?
4. What are the three goals/problems I would like to achieve/ solve before I die?

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Give Your Life a Spring Clean (continued)

5. What should I resign or drop out of? (Effectiveness is not doing things right but doing the right things.)
6. What can I postpone?
7. What things on my “to do” list/in my job description can someone else do 80% as well? (If 10% you should keep doing it. If with a little help 80%, then hand over those things to others.)
8. What is the “elephant” in my schedule? (If you were Noah and the Ark is about to sink, you wouldn’t look for a few mice or dogs to throw overboard, you would look for elephants!)
9. What are the three things that I could do in the next 90 days that would make 50% difference?
10. In whom should I be investing my life?

As a result of your spring clean and personal retreat, what have you been specifically challenged to:

- Start doing?
- Stop doing?
- Change or do differently?

The final step of your spring clean is to now follow through on these specific challenges and put them into action!

Carey Hauri is a life coach and can be found on Facebook at Carey Hauri Life Coaching, or contacted at careyhauri@mail.com.

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Inside Out

Stress Kills...Laughter Heals



"A cheerful heart is good medicine..." Proverbs 17:22 (NLT)

Peter Salerno, President of Laughter Clubs of Australasia, believes laughter is a gift that brings with it many health benefits.

Stressed out? Laugh and Relax.

Have you ever wondered why so many people get Stressed Out !!! What is it that stresses people out? After many years of working with people I have found that what stresses one person out will have no effect on others. So we need to ask, what is stress and how do we get stressed out?

How come it affects some more than others? But more importantly what do we do to relax stress?

Let me ask you a question. What do you do to relax? Some people just do not know what they do or what to do. Some will say "ah well I ... I ... well I go for a walk." I take the dog for a walk. I do the gardening. I read a book. I take a bath. I take a drink. I listen to music or I play music. Some say I go to sleep.

Well, all of these are good things to do. But I say the dog is not stressed out, why should you take the dog for a walk? As for doing the garden, if it is too hot, too cold or too wet, you should not do the gardening. If you read a book it will not necessarily relax you. If you take a bath, that is good but you can't keep taking baths every time someone upsets you. If you say, I take a drink. Thank you for being honest. But how many drinks do you need to relax and how productive are you if you are at work? Australia has a very high percentage of people that are under the influence of a substance at work.

If you are one that listens to music or plays music to relax, my response is this. If I get stressed, I can't find any music to play or listen to. Mozart is not right and Guns & Roses is not right and Country Music will depress me. If you play an instrument or listen to music everyone else will tell you to turn it down. And if you try to sleep when you are stressed out you will find that you can't sleep well and you toss and turn all night and wake up just as tired as the night before.

It is very important that we learn to do something to relax fast. Better still it is very important that we recognise what it is that upsets us and how to avoid it. We can't control others but we can control how we think and how we think will affect how we act and how we re-act. We need to know how to have control over our stress – so it either doesn't bother us or at least we can control how fast we let it go and relax.

The best thing to do is BREATH. Grandma use to say count to TEN!!! All that does is help you to breath.

The next best thing is to LAUGH. Yes Laugh. When we laugh we produce natural relaxation chemicals in our body.

The Benefits of Laughter

When we laugh the body produces serotonin, dopamine and endorphins and this mixes up with adrenalin and it rushes around the body and relaxes all the nerves and muscles and it makes us feel better and more relaxed.

When we laugh we take in more oxygen and oxygenate the blood and it increases the blood flow to all extremities and we have better circulation and we feel energised and alive.

The benefits of a ten minute laugh are better than a twenty minute jog.

Children laugh over 400 times a day. Adults laugh less than 20 times a day.

There are many tests that prove that laughter really is the best medicine. If there is a happy work place where people are allowed to laugh and share jokes, it is found that the team morale is high and production is high. The error rate is lower and the sick days are lower. The most important thing is - the stress levels are lower for everyone.

Ed: There is an old Yiddish proverb that says "What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul". Perhaps we should take Peter's advice and bathe in it a bit more often.

For more about laughter and Laughter Clubs of Australasia, email petersalerno@myacn.net.au.

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Spotlight on the Nations

Something of Value

“Over the course of the last 200 years, Aboriginal people have lost land, lost language, lost significant parts of culture. What is something of value that white Australia might give to Aboriginal Australia? From a Christian perspective, the answer is: God’s Word in

their language.” - Dr Peter Carroll, Bible Society Translation Consultant.

Before white settlement, there were an estimated 200-250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. 55,000 indigenous people still speak one of approximately 50 surviving indigenous languages as their primary language at home. Among these are some who do not speak English. “It is very confronting to sit down with fellow Australians and struggle to communicate effectively because we do not share a common language” says Gillean Smiley (CEO of Bible Society SA/NT).

Yet it is among such aboriginal brothers and sisters from remote parts of the outback, that Gillean has met truly inspiring Christians. “You can see Jesus so clearly in these people who hold fast to Him as their Lord and Saviour in the middle of very challenging circumstances, and who have a real desire to share His love and hope with others”.

One such is Warlpiri man Pastor Jerry Jangala. “Jerry’s story is remarkable” says Gillean. “After he and his family came out of the desert when he was a boy, and discovered white people – of whom they had been totally unaware – he quickly fell into a life of alcohol and unemployment. One day, Jesus came to him in a dream or vision and called him by name – and he has been following Jesus ever since”. After Jangala learned to read and write English, he was instrumental in the translation of the Warlpiri New Testament, became a Baptist pastor, head of the Baptist Union of the Northern Territory and has become a member of the General Division of the Order of Australia!

But even as Jangala rejoices in the Warlpiri Shorter Bible (containing the New Testament, eight books of the Old Testament, and Psalm 23), he and his people are still waiting for 31 books to have a complete Bible.

Only one indigenous language – Kriol – has the complete Bible today. Around 20 more have either the New Testament or partial Bibles (often called Shorter Bibles) containing the New Testament and selected books from the Old. The work of Bible translation is far from done.

Translation is only one part of the challenge. Bible Society Indigenous Scriptures Support Coordinator, Paul Eckert explains “If a person in Adelaide wants a Bible, they can get one the same day. But if a person in remote north-west South Australia wants some Pitjantjatjara Scriptures, it may be months before they can obtain one, and even then they may not be able to afford it”.

Another priority is to record more audio Scriptures for indigenous people from a traditionally oral culture, many of whom struggle with eye problems or low literacy. There are now 16 Aboriginal and Islander languages with some Scripture recorded and people are keen for more. When paired with Scripture booklets, audio also helps people to read more fluently, and the recordings are often used in group situations.

The Bible Society children’s booklet God’s Story for the Outback is now available to help indigenous communities to teach their children about God in simple English, Kriol, Pitjantjatjara, and the Wangkatja and Tjuunytjuunytjarra Wangka languages from Western Australia (bordering the APY Lands).

As Aboriginal people on the whole have a more visual culture, the development of multi-media resources will be of increasing importance in the future.

“Every person needs to have the Bible in their mother tongue, the language that they know best” says Paul Eckert. “Even people who know several languages will turn to their mother tongue for their own devotions. When they want to get the most out of the Bible, it is their own language they turn to.”

The Bible Society sees great value in partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christians as they translate, distribute and teach the Scriptures to their communities in their own heart languages.

For more information on the work of the Bible Society SA go to www.bible.com.au, telephone (08) 8292 4888 or email infos@bible.com.au.

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Spotlight on the Nations

A Brief History of the SA Prayer Breakfast

Chuck Colson, a former senior advisor to US President Nixon, visited Adelaide in 1979. He and Ray Kidney, CEO of Offenders Aid Rehabilitation Services (OARS) went to see the then Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Lord Mayor Bowen . During their conversation,

the Lord Mayor mentioned some concerns he had about Adelaide. In response, Chuck Colson told him about a prayer group in the US who were supporting the President.

Subsequent to that meeting, Ray Kidney and Paul Barnett, rector of Holy Trinity Anglican church on North Terrace, visited the Lord Mayor and the concept of an annual Prayer Breakfast was born. The original committee comprised Ray Kidney as chairman, Allan Brunt, John Morey, Don Beiler and Paul Barnett, later replaced by Rev Reg Piper.

The first function was actually a lunch on 22 April 1980 at the Festival Centre with guest speaker Tony Morphett of Sydney who talked about "The Search for Values". Ray Kidney acted as MC.

This was the beginning of what became an annual event on the South Australian calendar. Some of the speakers in those early years included singer and speaker Robert Coleman and Ian Milne, Managing Director of Kraft from Melbourne.

In about 1986 CBMC was approached by Ray and others to see if they would take over the responsibility of the Prayer Breakfast. Some of the people involved at the time were Reg Skurray, SA chairman of CBMC, Allan Brunt, Ian Turner, Ian Smith, Colin Schumaker, George Graetz, Ian Young and Laurie Nathan.

A number of these came from the Architects' Christian Fellowship who had previously agreed to throw their weight behind CBMC and subsequently, the Prayer Breakfast.

A highlight of the Breakfasts has always been the guest speaker. The aim has been to invite people who have achieved something worthwhile in society and at the same time have a deep faith in God and his son Jesus Christ, with evidence that their life is shaped by their faith.

Other speakers in those early years included the CEO of Mayne Nickless, Ian Milne, a director of G J Coles, and David Jenkin, general manager of Melbourne Central and chairman of the international board of World Vision. In more recent times Lisa McInnes-Smith and the Hon John Anderson, the then deputy Prime Minister, have also participated.

The chairman of the organising committee from 1992 to 2005 was Dennis Brown and the committee, who represent a variety of Christian denominations, currently comprises Geoff Kempster (chairman), Dennis Brown (secretary), Les Dennis and Des Blight. Under their direction the event has grown from around 200 guests to nearly 800 in 2009.

About sixteen years ago the South Australian board of CBMC felt it would be of benefit to invite the SA Parliamentary Christian Fellowship to join them in this venture. The invitation was accepted and, since then, their contribution has helped to enhance the event in a variety of ways.

Another regular feature has been to have a prominent Christian pray for the City, State and nation. Some of these have been heads of denominations; others have been people in business or the professions. Three people, including a school prefect, are now invited to pray for different aspects of our society.

As the event's profile has grown, attendance has increased. In 2009 some 770 people attended and the aim is to keep growing.

Over the years, the Prayer Breakfast has been held in a number of different venues including the Adelaide Hilton, The Festival Centre, The Adelaide Town Hall and more recently the Adelaide Convention Centre.

On many occasions we have been pleased to have the Governor of South Australia, the Premier of South Australia, the Leader of the Opposition, the Lord Mayor, politicians, union officials, business and professional people joining our other guests.

Our purpose can be summarised by the following statement:

"In order to see a nation influenced as a whole, a message must be communicated which has relevance for every individual in society. It must be timely as well as timeless. It must transcend barriers, be they racial, geographical or cultural. A message such as this is found in the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The uniqueness of this message is in the fact that it is not a system of doctrines or theories, but is

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A Brief History of the SA Prayer Breakfast (continued)

a relationship with a living person. It is Jesus Christ who can bring hope and comfort, strength and wisdom to every person and to every nation where it is rightly understood.

The purpose of the Prayer Breakfast therefore is to present this unique person of history and to consider the way He can affect our lives and the life of our nation both now and in the future. "