

## ***Religion is of life, and the life of religion is to do what is good***

*(Doctrine of Life 8)*

**The New Church** is an international organization of people striving to improve their conscious relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, the one God who rules heaven and earth.

We extend a warm welcome to everyone, and invite you to take what you like and return it freely. We use the Bible and the Heavenly Doctrine revealed by the Lord and published by Emanuel Swedenborg to guide us in our lives, especially in our relationships. We freely share our love and understanding with each other, and try to give one another support in our spiritual journeys.

Temporarily the Hurstville Society is without a **Pastor**. During this period the Society will be served by lay leaders and visiting preachers.

**Worship Services** are held each Sunday at 10:00 AM. **Sunday School** is held concurrently with the worship service.

**Young People's Group** is held once a month in conjunction with the Young People's Group at the New Church at 2 Shirley St, Roseville.

A **tea and social** in conjunction with **discussion** meets on the 1st Friday of each month (January excepted) beginning at 7 00 pm. This will be conducted by visiting ministers when available or lay led as appropriate.

**Bible Study and Discussion Classes** previously held midweek have been suspended until further notice.

**The Swedenborg Bookroom**, at 22 Dudley Street, Penshurst, contains books by and about Emanuel Swedenborg for sale or loan. It is open by appointment.

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Call or come at anytime.



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### **The New Church Newsletter**

**Hurstville Society August 2007**

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### **“If I Knew Then What I Know Now....”**

by Rev George McCurdy

Ephraim was a son of Joseph. The name Ephraim means “fruitful.” The tribe of Ephraim was blessed with a great heritage of prominent leaders. The people of Ephraim contributed sage advice in the glorious and successful days of Israel’s growth and power. Of all of the tribes of Israel, Ephraim was ranked about tenth in population. A census taken indicated that Ephraim’s army had 45,000 men ready to defend themselves and the Northern kingdom of Israel. The warriors of Ephraim were noted for the courage and gritty tenacity to win. That is, until we read about them in the 78<sup>th</sup> Psalm verse 9: “The children of Ephraim, being armed and carrying bows, **turned back in the day of battle.**”

Could this be true? What brought about this bleak moment in the prestigious history? Were the men of Ephraim fully armed and equipped

with bows and arrows turning in the face of a battle and fleeing like cowards? That kind of behaviour doesn't seem like them. What contributed to their cowardly actions? How can we grasp the shameful significance of their decision to call for a military retreat?

Psalms 78 succinctly gives us three reasons for their decision to run away:

1. "They kept not the covenant of God
2. and refused to walk in His law;
3. And (they) forgot His works, and His wonders that He had shown them."

Covenants with the Lord were intricately important parts of Israel's spiritual life. Time and time again the Lord made covenants with the children of the Lord. For His part the Lord kept His word. But Israel repeatedly failed to keep its word. Instead of becoming irate about Israel's short coming, the Lord, with Fatherly love and patience, offered them yet another covenant to live by. When a covenant is broken consequences follow the breach of His order. Disorder, wondering, spiritual blindness, confusion and yes cowardness follow in the wake of the breach of a covenant.

Refusing to walk in the laws of the Lord is a bad judgment call. The very word refuse means that a conscious decision was made to turn one's back on the Lord. Refusing to follow the Lord turns our reasoning to say: "I feel I know what is better for me than the Lord. My choices, my wants, my goals will take precedence over the leading of the Lord's stream of Providence." The Writings tell us about the nature of a rebellious and egotistic proprium: "it is constantly introducing obscurity, or falsity, into the understanding..." Arcana Coelestia 1047. "The proprium has no stronger desire than to plunge headlong into hell." AC 1049. The braver warrior takes on the proprium with the banner, bow and arrows of the Lord. The warrior of the Lord does not turn in the day of battle. A warrior of the Lord says: "No retreat - no compromises will be made with the enemy!"

Forgetting the Lord's works, forgetting His wonders and all that He has shown us causes a serious form of collective spiritual amnesia.

move into a nursing home in Revesby but hasn't been well recently. Shirle also hasn't been the best. Fortunately family and friends continue to support them well. Our best wishes to them both and it is our sincere hope that better times are ahead.

**Graeme McLeay** continues to be at the Jean Colvin Hospital in Darlington Point where he is undergoing post operational cancer therapy. Various members of the society have managed to visit him. He may be able to return home fairly soon.

It has been a pleasure to see the happy smiling face of Margaret Ward friend **Jan** in church regularly recently. Welcome.

We now have dates for our interns from Bryn Athyn, **Carling Wyncoll** and **Sarah Elder**. They will be arriving on Saturday September 1<sup>st</sup>. There has been enthusiastic contact with them lately and they are looking forward to helping out in our society. Their departure date is Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Altered Arrangements for Classes/Services in August**

There will be **NO CHURCH SERVICE** on **August 5<sup>th</sup>** due to a large part of the congregation being out of town for Norm Heldon's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and the pastor will be visiting Perth.

The **Friday dinner** and **class** for **August** will now be on the **second Friday** of the month (**10<sup>th</sup>**). This event will be a **combined Young People evening** with the **regular dinner and class**. It is likely the format will be more informal than normal so come along and relax, enjoy and participate. Roll up between 6.30 and 7.00 p.m. to say hello, pre-dinner drink etc but we would like to get started no later than 7.

### **Birthdays**

Happy Birthday to: **Norm Heldon** (90 on 1<sup>st</sup>), **George McCurdy** (2<sup>nd</sup>), **Grace Horner** and **Emily Kermond** (7<sup>th</sup>), **Mark Brettell**, (8<sup>th</sup>), **Rhonda Hall** (12<sup>th</sup>), **Rebekah Horner** (17<sup>th</sup>), **Larah Walsh** (21<sup>st</sup>), **Graeme McLeay** (22<sup>nd</sup>), **Robert Cooper** (28<sup>th</sup>) and **Ralph Horner** (30<sup>th</sup>).

Carolyn by that date. Please make cheques payable to Sydney Society of the New Church and mail to:

Carolyn Heldon  
15 Browallia Cr,  
Loftus NSW 2232

Additional general information can be obtained from Rev Julian Duckworth on (02) 9416 7032 and enquiries about subsidies should be made to Murray Heldon on (02) 9579 5248 or email [murrayheldon@optushome.com.au](mailto:murrayheldon@optushome.com.au). If you haven't received a brochure or want an additional copy please contact either Rev Julian Duckworth or Owen and Margaret Heldon (02) 9545 3823

### Farewell to the McCurdys

During August Rev George and Lois McCurdy will be visiting Perth (2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>) and Canberra (22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>). We will be sad to see them leave on 27<sup>th</sup> August departing for New Zealand en route to their home in USA.

After church on **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>** August there will be a **Pot Luck Luncheon** in Baringa to farewell our visiting pastor and his wife. Please bring a savoury and sweet to share. Drinks will be provided.

### News Notes

The latest email message we have received from **Cliff Adamou** is as follows: *"Missing you all, and having fun. I'm on my next leg of journey to Tucson, AZ and then Las Vegas/Grand Canyon and Boulder, CO. See you in the spring."* Late last month Cliff made a snap decision and set out on a trip of a lifetime to visit Bryn Athyn, see the Cathedral and catch up with friends. He has also visited Washington, staying with Garry and Laurel Walsh before setting off on the trip he mentioned above.

Our friends **Tom and Shirley Taylor** have been struggling. Tom has had to

Remembering the closeness and care of the Lord is important in the hand hand combat against the hells. Looking over our shoulder to see the Lord backing us up is essential. Our bows and arrows (the doctrines of truth) will direct specific arrows against the army of falsity from the hells. The arrow will hit their mark because the Lord is our captain and director of all our spiritual growth and integrity.

Saying the words **"If I knew then what I know now...."** is really a way of confessing how we have grown in experience and insights. We are saying we now see a way we could have avoided certain mistakes of the past. Seeing the mistakes of Ephraim and its cowardly flight from the enemy while fully armed is an important reflective insight. We do need "second chances." We do need to repair ourselves when we err. Keeping our covenant with the Lord is a daily issue. Our Baptism was a promise to enter life through **the gate of instruction**. When we sought the rite of Confirmation we promised to take over and maintain the continuance of that instruction started by our parents. When we approach the table of Holy Supper we pass through **the gate of Conjunction**. These two gates are of the Covenant with the Lord. They help us remember to humbly walk with the Lord. They help us not to forget His ways and they open our eyes to see the wonders of the Lord. His benefactions are indeed great and marvellous.

So in closing let's be grateful for the insights we can gather from the story of Ephraim. Ephraim whose name means "fruitful" (doubly fruitful; to be precise) gives us a chance to use **what we know now** to rejoice and use the power of reparations His Word gives to learn from and to correct the errors of the past.

May it not be said that we, in the day of battle, being fully armed turned and fled from the enemy. Let's listen to another leader from the tribe of Ephraim. Joshua said to his people: "Only be thou strong and be courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law.... Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." Joshua 1: 7.

"...a battle signifies in the Word spiritual combat which is a combat of falsity against truth and of truth against falsity." Apocalypse Explained 552

## Hugh J Keal

6<sup>th</sup> September 1915 – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2007

The Hurstville Society wishes to acknowledge the passing in July of a fellow parishioner and friend. Hugh Keal was an enthusiastic and active member of the Hurstville Society from October 1961 to February 1983 at which time he and his equally supportive wife Doreen, moved to Auckland New Zealand to be near family and to serve the New Church in that country.



Hugh and Doreen Keal during their last visit to Australia in March 1997.

In Church News in *New Church Life* May 1962 Norman Heldon reports: *South Africa's loss is Australia's gain. Mr. and Mrs. Keal and their four young boys arrived in October. A welcome evening was held at the church a few days after their arrival. The Rev. Donald L. Rose and Norman Heldon read some verses specially written for the occasion, and Mr. Keal showed a selection of slides on Africa. The Keals have settled in well in their adopted country and adopted society. . . . A week after Christmas, the Keal family invited their new-found Hurstville friends to their home. After we had sung "Our Glorious Church," Mr. Rose conducted a service of home dedication.*

Within a short time Hugh was doing Treasurer work for the society and continued in this capacity for nearly ten years after which he was Auditor. The Rev Doug Taylor brings out many of Hugh's other worthy qualities in a Memorial Address (see below) written for the family for Hugh's funeral held on 21<sup>st</sup> July, conducted by Rev Dick Keyworth.

Each day began with devotions at 8:45 and classes ended around 5:30 in the evening. There were tea breaks and a lunch break which gave the attendees a wonderful chance to bond in friendship and good humour. Margar Arnold was the consummate care giving, nurturing tea time and lunch provider.

The lecturing staff consisted of Ian Arnold, David Millar and George McCurdy. Each participant received notes and ample time to ask questions and to share insights. This writer can't express it enough – this was a valuable seminar. I would encourage readers to register for the next one possible. You will come away inspired and informed about the Word at the Writings.

One last note: Les Sheppard and Bev were there for a day and we had a wonderful visit with the Rev. Bruce Williams and his wife. Bruce turns 90 this coming August 3rd. His participation for the day was awesome as he spoke with a joy and clarity of devotion to the ministry of the Lord's New Church.

Ian and David did a great job organizing the Seminar and this writer [George McCurdy], with his wife Lois, were honoured to be asked to have part in the Seminar. Thank you Ian and David, for your invitation and hard work to educate and strengthen the New Church in Australia.

## New Church Family Camp 2008

In recent issues of the newsletter we gave details of the next Summer Family Camp to be held at Mangrove Mountain Retreat about 1½ hours drive north of Sydney. The camp begins on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 and runs to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2008 – a little earlier than usual. **It is important that we get a good indication of numbers by 1<sup>st</sup> September** so that firm arrangements can be made with the Conference Centre organisers. But don't wait till the last minute.

The booking officer for this camp is **Carolyn Heldon** and a deposit of \$50 for individuals or \$100 for a couple or family should be forwarded

Considering the problems regarding water conservation there he writes: “the corresponding situation on the spiritual plane might be that our ignorance or the pride of our own intelligence can lead us to manipulate the truth rather than respect it for what it is. If we fail to humbly adapt the truth to our own purposes, we might experience the spiritual equivalent of flooding, waste and drought. Certainly, the Great Flood recorded in Genesis was due to the wickedness of men who were giants in their own eyes. Likewise the waste of the inheritance of the young son in the parable was due to self-centred living, and the drought in the time of Elijah was due to the arrogance of Ahab and Jezebel in bypassing the worship of the Lord for that of idols.”

Note that Rev Alden, while giving us food for thought on these problems is not declaring that the unhealthy spiritual state of mankind is the cause of Climate Change and Global Warming.

I like the footnote to his article. “May the rain of heaven continue to water with truth the fields of spiritual goodness in you, and may you adapt to the amount the Lord gives, conserving it wisely for use in every state of life.”

Read the article, it is on the stand in Baringa and might stimulate further discussion (or request a copy from the editors).

### **Intensive Seminar at the Australian New Church College**

Held July 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Brisbane

The Australian New Church College hosted an important Intensive Seminar. There were 9 full time participants through the course of the week but that number changed daily as about 10 or more people dropped in for a day or a half day.

Topics ranged from a series of Arcana lessons on the life of Moses; the Gospel presentation of the Life of the Lord; the book of Revelation; witnessing the Second Coming; sermon delivery; Experiences drawn from 45 years of ministry and an overview of the Minor Prophet Obadiah.

## **In Memory Of Hugh Keal**

by the Rev. Douglas Taylor

Today we are remembering and honouring the life of a very honourable and memorable man.

Hugh Keal was born in South Africa but he was not to die there, for he lived many years in Sydney, Australia and for his last years on earth Auckland, New Zealand.

His work was in the Finance Department of the South African Railway which he served “sincerely, honestly, and faithfully” (*The Doctrine of Charity* 158), since he was very conscientious in all aspects of his life.

In the Second World War, Hugh enlisted and went off to serve his native country. In the course of doing this, he became a prisoner of war, and eventually an *escaped* prisoner of war. That is a matter of fact, but let us not gloss over the danger and nerve-wracking experiences involved on a daily basis in successfully avoiding being captured, until at last he was able to rejoin his fellow soldiers in safety. Only a man of strong character could endure to the end.

After the War, he met and married Doreen Lumsden. Together they had four sons. Hugh loved his wife, his marriage, his home life, and his four sons. As a father he was devoted to making sure by precept and example that they knew what was good and useful. He used his considerable practical skills to equip them for a useful life in this world.

Hugh learned of the New Church from Doreen and her siblings, and steadily became more and more devoted to its teachings, thus adding a spiritual dimension to the valuable moral principles he had learnt in his youth. As a result, in his retirement years he looked forward eagerly to the daily readings of the Doctrine with Doreen.

At the age of 47, he and Doreen left their native land and moved the family to Sydney, Australia. The reason for this great upheaval was that

Hugh had begun to fear that there might soon be a violent reaction to the South African government's policy of apartheid.

Hugh had no great difficulty in finding suitable employment in Sydney, as he was already an expert in computers at a time when they were by no means commonplace. At first his Company used him to train in new treasurers, until they finally realized it would be more sensible to make *him* the Treasurer, a post that he carried out with distinction.

He soon resumed his activities in the Masonic Lodge and the New Church. As his Pastor for eleven years, I can testify to the great use he performed for the Church. With his expertise and experience, he was an outstanding Treasurer, for which the Church gladly acknowledges that it owes him a great debt of gratitude.

In addition to the valuable qualities already mentioned, Hugh was a warm and genial friend and, being very practical, he was a much appreciated "fix-it" man at the Hurstville Church, volunteering tirelessly on "work days."

The Keal family was always a united family, but circumstances decreed that they were to be *geographically* separated. Two of the sons found their wife in America, and the other two married in New Zealand. When Hugh and Doreen found they had no family left in Australia, they moved to New Zealand, where at least they could see half of their grandchildren regularly.

Hugh was well prepared for life in the spiritual world. His life on earth, his character, his personality ensure that he will be greatly missed in this world. But we can heartily rejoice with him as he enters his new life, free from the ill health of his physical body, and restored and revitalized with a perfect spiritual body that will last forever.



"a person is in the next life as soon as he has died, carrying on to the full the life he was leading in the world; the nature of his life remains the same as it was in the world."  
(Arcana Coelestia 5006)

## Extreme Weather Conditions

by Norman Heldon

The Australian poet, Dorothea McKellar, was living in England for some time when she was young. Though she appreciated the quiet beauty of England she began to pine for her beloved Australia. She wrote:

*I love a sunburnt country,  
A land of sweeping plains,  
Of rugged mountain ranges,  
Of droughts and flooding rains.*  
(1<sup>st</sup> stanza)

Well, we've just experienced both drought and flooding rain, more severe no doubt than Dorothea recalled. First the drought; farmers in desolate fields unsown, cattle and sheep dying. Some farmers have left the land where their families had been for many years. In some areas ravaged by bushfires accompanied the drought. Then the heavy rain, rivers breaking their banks, towns flooded.

The problems are world wide, and there are warnings of worse to come. Climate change, global warming are words we hear every day. It is recognised that man is to blame for the severity of the devastation. Countries madly pursue an affluent style of living.

The thought comes that perhaps the spiritual state of mankind is the cause of these natural disasters, but is that treading on uncertain ground?

Then I happened on an article in The New Church Voice of Florida by the Rev Kenneth J Alden. He writes of the cycle of flooding, waste and drought in South Florida. This is seen to be the result of man's efforts to drain the land for more than 100 years for habitation, agriculture and recreation. Though not considering the issues called Climate Change and Global Warming, he looks at spiritual lessons that can be learned from man's unwise interference with the harmony of nature.