

***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.

L to R. Chris and Margaret Skinner, Brian O'Neill, Alain and Jeanne Nicolier, David Millar, David and Pam Moffat, Julian and Ruth Duckworth



## The New Church Newsletter

### Hurstville Society February 2008

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### Summer Camp 2008

Mangrove Mountain Retreat is situated in a beautiful 45ha bushland setting adjoining the 1000 ha McPherson State Forest, west of Gosford on the NSW Central Coast. Set amongst native eucalypt and banksia, this location proved to be the perfect setting for our annual summer camp. We were even blessed with mild weather.

This year's annual camp actually started last year – New Year's Eve to be exact. Arrival was 3 pm onwards which enabled people to settle in before dinner. After a few get-to-know-you games in the evening the New Year was welcomed with sparklers and bubbly (non alcoholic). This was the beginning of an absorbing and fun filled week that began in earnest the following morning.

An opening devotion each morning was followed by preparations for the

*Drama of God*, led by **Rev Julian Duckworth** (Sydney) who conceived, wrote the script, dance movements, skits and the many songs for what was to become a Grand Finale to the week. Julian is to be congratulated on blending a story of God's creation, His love for us, His desire for us to have fun and live in harmony, into a moving performance. The *Drama* reached its finale on our last morning which was Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> January, when it played out in full with everyone participating and culminating in a fitting climax in which a choir coached by **David Moffat** with lead singer **Carolyn Heldon** ended with a performance of *Gabriella's Song* (from the movie *As It Is In Heaven*). Those of you who have seen the movie will know how moving this song is. Well, David's arrangement topped that!

The good news is that the *Drama of God* was videotaped by **Len Robinson**. Apparently the quality is very good and the Robinsons are in the process of editing it to produce a DVD. If anyone would like a copy please contact Owen or Margaret Heldon (02) 9545 3823.

There was so much more to enjoy at the camp. The second session each morning provided a choice of two sessions led by the other ministers attending viz **Revs David Millar** (Adelaide), **David Moffat** (Canberra), **Alain Nicolier** (Hurstville Society) **Brian O'Neill** (Wollongong) and **Chris Skinner** (Melbourne) all in various ways dealing with the theme for the week – God. The younger teenagers and children were looked after by **Julian and Ruth Duckworth**.

Afternoons had plenty to offer as well. Rock climbing, canoeing, flying fox and giant swing – all on location at the camp site – provided many challenges. For others there was the pool, bushwalking or playing table tennis (in the absence of Cameron Robinson we have a new – temporary – champion in Owen Heldon). Later in the afternoon or evenings there were optional sessions run by many of the camp attendees that showed a wide range of talents. Topics included natural therapy (Angela Heldon), Swedenborg and drugs (Patrick Morahan), homeopathy (Sylvia Hicks), movies created by Spencer Perdriau, painting classes (Michelle Heldon), correspondences (Norman Heldon) and *The Infinite Complexity of Divine Truth* (Cor Visser-Marchant).

Footnote: We will be making arrangements at a suitable time to enable people to view the CD of photos and the movie. It is quite good and really captures the excitement of the children.

## **Farewell to Rev Alain and Jeanne Nicolier**

After church on **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>** February 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

## **The Journey Programme**

The Hurstville Society has joined the worldwide Journey Programme promoted by the General Church which considers the application of the Journey from Egypt to Canaan in our own lives. Fifteen people met for our first group study on 21<sup>st</sup> January and this will continue on Monday evenings at 7.30 p.m. throughout February and March. Sunday services will be on the same weekly topic as the programme. There are a couple of spare workbooks for anyone wishing to join the programme.

## **News Notes**

It was a pleasure to welcome some overseas visitors over the Christmas/New Year period. **Scott and Kimberly Lockhart** joined Mum and Dad for Christmas. **Sylvie Houbre**, a close friend of Jeanne Nicolier spent several weeks here and also attended the Summer Camp. She contributed by offering Chi Quong each morning before breakfast.

## **Birthdays**

Happy Birthday to **John Hicks** (9<sup>th</sup>), **Mike Lockhart** (11<sup>th</sup>), **Anne Lawrence** (21<sup>st</sup>), **Kathryn Kennedy** (24<sup>th</sup>),

## Thank You from Ngalangangpum School

The following is a letter by the principal, Sister Alma Cabassi:

It is with pride, enthusiasm and satisfaction that I enclose a CD of photos and video taken of the Ngalangangpum High School students on their “Bush to Big Smoke” educational excursion.

While we thought the two weeks might have been a long time, and it was for the supervisors/teachers, the students were able to be educated, encouraged and supported through the learning experiences. One of the most extensive was the social scene and being “on show” most of the time.

The teachers were firm and kept the framework that linked to the curriculum and expected behaviours. This enabled the movement through the higher, more participative activities to the passive, listening and observing activities.

Reflection most evenings gave the students the opportunity to learn from the day and consider ways that would enhance the group and give everyone a good time.

I believe from the reports from the teachers that there was some basic learning and eye opening experiences which gave the students a new vision or another perspective and more information to draw on.

Thank you for providing so generously for our students and enabling them to have such a positive experience. This was an enormous contribution to the whole learning time.

Many were not that enthusiastic about returning home. The two weeks saw most grow within and some champions were discovered.

I take this opportunity to wish you every blessing of the Christmas season and if you have a holiday break may it be refreshing for you.

In the evenings we had The Quest (where we all had the chance to be knights and damsels), Country Dancing, a Trivia night, and the usual hilarious Talent Night. A workshop was hosted by Alain Nicolier regarding a proposed retreat which received a lot of interest and enthusiasm (see report below). Thursday’s outing was to the coastal township of The Entrance.

Around eighty persons attended coming from all over Australia as well as from New Zealand, France, UK, and far-flung Finland!

Next year it is hoped to host a camp at Kiah Ridge, located in the Southern Highlands of NSW where we have had two previous successful camps. More information as it comes to hand.

### An Australian Retreat

As readers of this publication will be aware, since the short visit in May 2007 to the Hurstville Society by Rev Alain and Jeanne Nicolier (see June 2007 Newsletter) and their follow up current one (28<sup>th</sup> November 2007 to 17<sup>th</sup> February 2008) there has been much discussion about the possibility of an Australian Retreat. “An Important Notice” from our January 2008 News Notes was circulated at the Mangrove Mountain Camp. It included these fundamental concepts:

- To share and present the Heavenly Doctrines in a concrete and holistic way
- To adapt to a larger audience with a universal and therapeutic approach
- To offer a form of spirituality addressing the needs of the soul, the mind and the body
- To enable New Church and other people to be hosted in such a retreat centre to take a break from worldly worries in order to reflect on and enrich their spiritual and physical health and to enrich their relationship with God, other people and themselves. Activities such as: spiritual growth groups, marriage counselling and enrichment, farming, gardening, doctrinal studies, individual therapy, massage, prayer, meditation, etc . . . could be developed there.

From a workshop by Rev Alain Nicolier at the camp (attended from all over Australia plus some from overseas) and a following scheduled Hurstville Society Meeting afterwards on 13<sup>th</sup> January it is evident that people are excited about the vision.

**Len Robinson** from Victoria has agreed to be a contact point for the collection of ideas. His address is:  
318 Fussell Street  
BALLARAT Victoria 3350  
Email: lenrob@netconnect.com.au

If we look to the Lord He will guide us in His ways.:

*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out;  
When you see the naked, that you cover him,  
And not hide yourself from your own flesh?  
Then your light shall break forth like the morning,  
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,  
And your righteousness shall go before you;  
The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.  
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
You shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'*                      Isaiah 58:7-9

### Pastoral Visits

During their stay in Australia Rev Alain and Jeanne Nicolier have been getting around and visiting New Church people in many parts of Australia. From 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> January they visited the Gold Coast and Brisbane, hosted by **Brian** and **Gaye Heldon** and taking the opportunity to see **Revs Ian Arnold** and **Les Sheppard** among others.

From 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> January they had a whirlwind trip to **Tamworth** to meet some **Horners, Graham, Grace** on the farm, **Ken and Kerry** at East Maitland. As this goes to press are conducting a mini retreat near Tharwa south of **Canberra**. From 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> February they will be in **Perth**. Phew!

## Trevor Favell

Recollections by Rev Douglas Taylor

It was a happy day for the Hurstville Society when Trevor and Audrey Favell first appeared at the Church. It was clearly an act of the Divine Providence. Audrey had been driving their car near Penshurst when she stopped at a red light behind a car driven by the Rev. Michael Gladish, the current Pastor.

His bumper sticker caught her attention. It read: "Read Swedenborg." This "rang a bell" in her memory. An older relative of hers used to read Swedenborg, she recalled. Her interest being awakened, they contacted the Church and they both began to attend. Trevor soon became a keen reader of the Heavenly Doctrine as well as Audrey.

Not only were they regular participants in Classes and worship services, but they at once put their names on the duty lists. Trevor, an engineer with drainage as his specialty, soon solved the Church's drainage problems. He also devoted many hours to working in the Bookroom and Library, where he felt very much at home. As he did not drive, he came by bus and then walked the remainder of the way.

When sadly Audrey had a stroke, he walked every day to visit her in Hospital. After some time, his doctor advised him to reduce his walking schedule, as it was wearing him out. Eventually he was able to be in the same Nursing Home as Audrey.

Now, with his passing into the spiritual world, he will have a new body and no health problems. He will be able to be actively useful again, which will free him from the burden of time, as he looks forward to being with Audrey again.



their heads, they were sprinkling ashes on themselves, putting on sackcloth, they would fast. They would walk on their knees. All that to express grief which is legitimate. So it is very legitimate today and the days coming to express feelings, and the weeks coming – it might last for some of you. There are emotions of sadness, emotions of emptiness and also feelings of regret, guilt, fear, doubt. There can be also anger, loneliness. All those feelings which are so deep and legitimate. Don't avoid them. Don't try to get rid of them. Let them come out. It is a key to healing to let emotions come and express them. What is the opposite to expressing emotions? It is depression. Feelings stay inside – not expressed. And in today's world there is a tendency not to express those feelings. When someone dies we don't want to dwell too much on it. It is a big mistake.

I would like to read another passage from the Book of John. "Let not your heart be troubled. If you believe in Good, believe also in me. In My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go I will prepare a place for you and I will come again and receive you to myself that where I am you may be also." Now when King David lost his son he said to the prophet "I shall go to him but he shall not return to me".

So that is what I would like to say to Trevor's family "you will meet again" with a much better dimension, much better space. Trevor was weary at the end of his life because of his illness. He was not himself anymore. And now you can experience the joy of Trevor being himself again, his true self, because the spirit never dies, living on getting wiser. And Audrey will probably feel the presence of Trevor even closer. Because you were so close and in such communion. Trevor adored you so much he is probably near you right now, holding you, loving you, still loving you. And it is a very tender feeling, very beautiful sight to behold - Trevor and Audrey's spirits being joined.

Now we are going to pause for a minute and meditate with music. I think Emma [granddaughter] is going to sing. (The Lord's my shepherd)

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007

## **Trevor Frank Favell**

27<sup>th</sup> March 1921 to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Resurrection Address by Rev Alain Nicolier

(This talk was recorded and has been transcribed and edited somewhat.)



I would like to say a few words about Trevor even though I have never met him and I am not trying to give you a complete biography. It would be too long and so I am just going to give you a few comments that friends and family have told me. Trevor was in his 87<sup>th</sup> year. He is the oldest of seven children and he has been a civil engineer for the railways and the navy. He was a brilliant scientist, mathematician and a lot of people have told me he was a very clever man. He was a searcher and he was an independent thinker.

Chris told me that his father educated himself pretty much on his own. Then he taught engineering doing his best to ensure all his students could succeed. He tried never to take advantage of anyone and tried to treat them fairly. It is interesting that as a searcher he built his own celestial telescope and he could see the rings of Saturn.

One thing that he adored most on the face of this earth was his wife Audrey and of course his son Chris. He was very committed to his family – it was a priority to him. I am told he had just a few friends and was a quiet and gentle man. He only shared his opinions with his wife and son. I was told by some of the church people that he was a reading man.

In 1991 Trevor and Audrey, both spiritual searchers, joined the church. Trevor was very happy to find the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. He probably enjoyed very much Swedenborg's scientific background. I am told his comment when he first came was that he "felt very much at home in the New Church. I feel this is my spiritual family". He was very dedicated to the church. He became the librarian and catalogued all the books. He came

every day to do this. He also designed the drainage system in the church grounds. To him there was a nice conjunction of science and spirituality in the Writings of Swedenborg. Swedenborg had said that “it is now time to enter with intelligence into the mysteries of faith”. That suited Trevor – to enter with the rational mind into the mysteries of faith. Being also a scientist it was necessary for him to understand the mysteries with his reason.

Chris told me that he was a true father to him. He was adopted at the age of six and Trevor considered him as his true son. Seven years ago Trevor had some brain problems and that affected him greatly. He became more solitary, sometimes confused but he stayed very devoted to his wife Audrey. He visited her every day after her stroke in 1995.

I would like to read to you in that respect a passage from the Writings of Swedenborg about true conjugal love. It is in the book called “Conjugal Love”. It says “couples who have lived in the state of true conjugal love are not actually separated by the death of one for the spirit of the deceased continues to dwell with the spirit of the one not yet deceased. And this until the death of the other at which time they come together again and are reunited loving each other even more tenderly than before because they are in the spiritual world”.

Further in the same book we read “Those who are in heaven are continually advancing to the spring of life and to a spring so much more delightful and happy the thousands of years they live and this to eternity and increase according to the degrees and progressions of their love, charity and faith. Women who have died old but have lived in faith and charity toward the neighbour after a succession of years come more and more into the flower of youth and early womanhood and into a beauty that exceeds the idea of beauty perceivable by our sight. Goodness and charity are what form the resemblance of itself and cause the beauty of charity to shine forth from the minutest parts of the face.” Now these are very comforting words and as I said Trevor really enjoyed reading the Writings of Swedenborg for many years.

As you come here today there are mixed feelings. There are feelings of joy knowing that death is only a parting from the body but the true Trevor continues on living in the spiritual world with a body that will ever grow younger and healthier. Joy knowing he will meet family and friends who have preceded him. Joy knowing that he will be able to grow in his beloved use and contribute in his unique way to the perfection of the Lord’s kingdom. We can imagine Trevor, being such a seeker, a scientist wanting to meet great people in the other life such as Pythagoras, Einstein – why not?

As I was talking to Chris a couple of days ago that belief is just a matter of choice. We can never know for sure what exists but we can choose what we want to believe in order to make us happier. What do we choose to believe in except beliefs that will help us to be happier, more useful and better people? That’s the use of belief, the use of faith. So in the New Church we choose to believe that life goes on forever and gets better and better if we choose so. So there is joy in thinking that Trevor right now is not in the casket here. He is already resurrected. He is already meeting his friends and family that have preceded him. We can have joy knowing that he is still in heart and spirit with the loved ones here and especially Audrey and Chris. Chris has told me “He is here, right here. He will never depart from my heart”.

Of course we also have mixed feelings of sadness, sadness because of the physical loss. It is very sad to lose someone’s presence – the sound of his voice, his humour, his touch, his smell, the noise of his footsteps and it is very legitimate to grieve. It is very legitimate and I encourage everyone not to bypass emotions of sadness. There is an emptiness here on earth, even though a new space is filled in the spiritual world there is an emptiness left here.

The Bible talks a lot about grieving and in this day and age there is a tendency not to deal with death even though some day we will all die and death is part of life. And it is necessary to get into the feelings. In the Old Testament they have many, many rituals that meant something about the spiritual dimension. They were tearing their garments, they were shaking