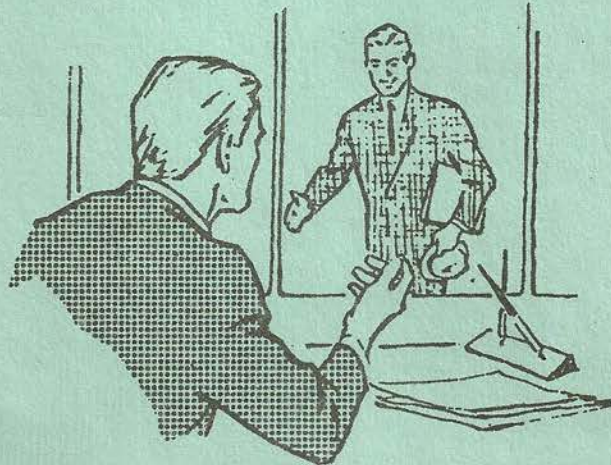


National AOTS Newsletter

Vol. 5, No. 2. May 1982.



AOTS: ... extending the right hand
of Christian fellowship ...



- In this issue:
- Club news
 - "On being a leader ..."
 - "Is God Biased in Favour of the Poor?"
 - Program tips; aids for devotions
 - 1981 Annual Financial Statement
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 - President Gordon Hall off to Newfoundland
 - Editorial

AOTS is a movement of United Church men founded in 1923 and dedicated to promoting Christian fellowship, deepening the spiritual life of men, and developing effective programs of Christian service. Clubs are active across Canada, from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland, and in Bermuda, and are united under the National Association. The Newsletter is published by the National Association for the exchange of information between clubs and individual members. It appears three times a year: January, April and October, from the office of the executive secretary: G. Allan Smith, 61 Nordin Avenue, Toronto, Ont. M8Z 2B4. The editor is M. M. Wright.

Editor Emeritus - W. Jack Banks

National Association of United Church AOTS Men's Clubs

The United Church of Canada

"I am among you As One That Serves." Luke 22:27.

COMING EVENTS

May 20 - 24 - First Canadian Christian Festival, Ottawa, Ont. An ecumenical event, the first of its kind in Canada. For information contact U.C. House, Toronto, Rev. Turner.

June 4 - 6 - West Newfoundland Rally, Westhaven Camp, Pasadena, Nfld.

June 4 - 6, 11 - 13 - United Church Muskoka Conference, 30th Anniversary. Theme speaker: Rev. Bob Mumford, St. George's U.C., Toronto, on "Renewable Resources". There will be two weekends in 1982, each for Men - Women - Couples - Singles, a new format. June 4 - 6 is at Elgin House Lodge, Port Carling, Ont., June 11 - 13 at Delawana Inn, Honey Harbour. Registration: Mr. Don Gard, 5078 Spruce Avenue, Burlington, Ont. L7L 1M8.

June 12 - 14 - 17th Riding Mountain Conference of Churchmen, Camp Wannakumbac, Clear Lake, Manitoba. Registration: Reg Hedley, Box 367, Hamiota, Man.

*September 18 - 19 - 27th Stanhope Men's Conference, Camp Abeqweit, P.E.I.

*September 24 - 26 - 27th Central Newfoundland Men's Conference, Loon Bay Camp.

October 15 - 17 - 28th Banff Men's Conference, Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta. For information contact Keith Robin, 3008 11th Avenue South, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 0L9.

*October 16 - Hamilton Conference Fall Rally (note the advanced date).

November 7 - Toronto Conference Fall Rally, Cedar Glen Conference Centre, 2:30 to 9 PM. Theme address by Rev. Bruce McLeod, Richmond Hill U.C.: "God's Ministry and Our's", with Rev. Bob Lindsey assisting with leadership.

*April 29 - May 1 - Ontario AOTS Round-Up, Geneva Park, Orillia, Ont. For information contact Lloyd Richards, 15 Diane Road, Chatham, Ont. N7L 1N6.

→ → July 22 - 24, 1983 - 13th Biennial Convention of The National Association of U.C. AOTS
 → → Men's Clubs, on the campus of Memorial University, St. John's Newfoundland. Plan now
 → → for a July vacation in Newfoundland and to attend this meeting - the opportunity of a
 → → lifetime!

→ → 1985 National AOTS Convention? We are open for invitations!

* Dates are tentative.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Presented</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
<u>NEW CHARTERS</u> - Cliffcrest U.C., Toronto, Ont.	#298A	May 2/82	Kingston Road AOTS
Buchans U.C., Buchans, Nfld.	#561A	May 5/82	-

Executive secretary Al Smith reports that he received many enquiries about Phil Spence during the recent Ontario AOTS Round-Up (April 23-25). Phil was absent this year, for the first time in what must be a good many years. Al has since been in touch with him and says that he is well, having fully recovered from the serious fall he suffered in November 1980, and has even taken on the job of vice chairman of Renfrew Presbytery (Bay of Quinte Conference). This is good news and we hope to see him at the 1983 round-up.

The fall, incidently, was really a bad one and he was ever so fortunate to escape without serious injury. He described it as follows (in a December/1980 letter):

"I fell off my roof ... dropping about 12 feet after sliding down about 15 feet of 45° slope. Shot out enough to clear the railing on a 6-foot wide walkway and a cement walk, and lit flat out on my right side. Fortunately no broken bones, but lots of bruises and pulled muscles. However, I feel better each day and realize how lucky I was."

As many of you know, Phil succeeded D.R. Poole as executive secretary, serving from 1956 until retirement in 1970. He served again, Jan/76 to Jan/78, Al Smith then taking over. Phil is living in Deep River, Ontario.

"God is almighty.

God has all the power there is. He does not possess any power that there is not. Thus, because he is a God of reason he cannot do what is irrational.

It must, therefore, be frankly said that God's power is limited.

It is not, however, limited by any being or thing external to himself, but by his own nature and purpose. God is limited by his own nature."

Eric G. Jay, Professor of Systematic Theology, McGill University, Montreal, in "Why Does God Allow Evil", Forward Movement Publications, 1966, Cincinnati.

CLUB NEWS

News, news, and still more news! The flow is without end for the work goes on.

British Columbia Conference

Fairfield U.C., Victoria (#685), editor Ted Belt's April/May/June newsletter (evidently saving on postage here!). Topics for the April and May meetings: a talk on Camp Pringle (which is supported by the Vancouver Island clubs), and one on the "Sally Ann". And on June 12th, the 9th Annual Strawberry Tea. A further \$160 in donations reported, to Naramata, Camp Pringle, and the Upper Room Rescue Mission. A membership of 50 is target '82.

Brechin U.C., Nanaimo (#048). From the 1981 annual report: a varied program of dinner meetings, the topics including diabetes, the film "Lotomania", ministry in Japan, life in Australia. Donations in 1981 totalled \$2900: \$1000 to Student Ministers Fund, \$600 to Brechin Leadership Fund, \$200 to the Thomas Crosby V, \$125 to C.G.I.T., \$150 to AOTS Second Mile Fund, and \$825 to various local church needs and improvements --- certainly a fine record of service.

Duncan U.C., Duncan (#016), an abundance of notes and clippings from Don Morton (Don is an amazing person; he attends as well virtually every other AOTS meeting on the Island, and sends reports on them all). The 12th Annual Burns Night, a supper and dance, drew 200 members and guests and earned the club \$677. It had all the trimmings: the traditional piping in of the haggis accompanied by 20 waiters in formal attire, an "address to the haggis", a "toast to the lassies", a eulogy "to the immortal memory of Robert Burns" (by Don himself), and Scottish songs and dances. And the men did all the cooking, serving, etc. The Ladies Night and 32nd annual installation of officers (the club was chartered in 1951) followed on January 28th, 116 present (including 21 guests from 5 neighbouring clubs). Films and slides of the early years of the club featured the program and Jim Myhre took office as 1982 president. The evening ended with dancing to the club orchestra! At the February meeting - a very interesting 1940 film on the wartime work of Canadian bush pilots, and in March - a musical presentation by their junior choir and a talk on the Thomas Crosby V. The latter was followed by presentation of a \$500 donation. Two other events: an AOTS stall at the Handicapped Bazaar (March 6, resulting in a donation of \$150), and the Pancake Brunch (March 28, netting \$266). Coming up: annual Spring Tea (May 8), work party at Camp Pringle (May 27), "Mammoth" Garage Sale (June 12), and annual Fun Fare at the Owens' farm (June 23). Ernie Stafford heads their splendid club visitation program and reports 3 clubs visited in each of January and February, averaging 4 men per occasion.

From the 1981 report we note a total of \$6067 in donations, 62% of this to the church and balance to 15 community and other charitable organizations. Biggest fund raisers were the sale of nuts (\$3215) and the garage sale (\$2241). They do a remarkable work.

"The primary responsibility of the local Club is to be an arm of the Church reaching out in Christian fellowship to all men."

Your AOTS membership card.

From Don's notes and clippings of other meetings:

Gordon U.C., Victoria (#757) - in April, a talk by Rabbi Martin Levan and visit to the Victoria Synagogue (built in 1862, and renovated; said to be the oldest in Canada). A "very moving and interesting evening" said Don. Coming up: Mother's Day Tea (May 8) and Ladies Night and Dance (May 14).

Oak Bay U.C., Victoria (#404) - in February, a talk on "Life in the Camerouns", and in April, the annual elections with officers to be installed in June when Dr. Geo. Tuttle, immediate past moderator of the U.C., will speak. Gordon Horwood is incoming president.

Chemainus-Ladysmith (#769) - Ernie Stafford (Duncan) was guest speaker in February, talking on a trip to Britain and Northern Ireland. Duncan sponsored the formation of this small club in 1955. This event was recalled and appreciation expressed for Duncan's continuing support over the years. A number of donations were approved, including \$170 to the AOTS Second Mile Fund.

Centennial U.C., Victoria (\$362) - in January, installation of the new executive by Duncan's Ernie Stafford. The program featured a piano recital, and the film "Incan Rainbows", the story of an ecumenical development co-op in South America.

Lake Cowichan U.C., Lake Cowichan (#317) - despite having only 7 members this club accomplishes a great deal. They too have been generously supported by Duncan. In January they heard Ernie Stafford's talk on Britain and Northern Ireland, in February one on Western Samoa, and in March Al and Dorothy Treble of Duncan (Al is immediate past president) spoke on their rock collecting hobby. The 1981 report shows donations of \$540, and they began 1982 with a \$500 donation to the Lake Cowichan Pastoral Charge and \$35 to the Cowichan Music Festival AOTS Bursary. Best fund raiser is the sale of nuts, this netting \$700 in 1981. Bob Thiessen is 1982 president.

And in other news:

The quarterly meeting of the Vancouver Island District Council held April 16th was attended by 43 men representing 10 clubs, the 10th being of St. Andrew's U.C., Nanaimo, where there are signs of renewed interest in AOTS. So there is a cautious optimism that a 10th Island club may soon enter the AOTS fold. Prospects in five other areas are also being explored.

The B.C. Round-Up (March 27th, Collingwood U.C., Vancouver) was reported a great success. 75 men attended and 15 ladies joined them for the evening banquet. The theme address was given by Rev. Jim Elliot, Highlands U.C. Speaking on "Take Charge of Your Life", he discussed the various pressures in our lives and how we might better deal with them. The program also included national, provincial, and Island reports, and a session on the mission boat Thomas Crosby V. The latter led to a unanimous vote in favour of taking on a second \$3500 project in support of this important service.

Archivist Bill Hastings informs us that the first B.C. Round-Up was held 33 years ago on the Labour Day weekend. For a time they were weekend events, some at Naramata. It is now a one-day meeting alternating between the Island and the mainland. Centennial U.C. will host the 1983 gathering, on March 26th.

As we noted in the last Newsletter (February 1982, page 22), the B.C. Handshake has been revived with Bill Hastings handling the editorial chores. In the current issue he writes on the forthcoming Coastal Christian Men's Conference (April 30 - May 2), reports on the B.C. Round-Up, and introduces a new feature called "profiles", short reviews on some B.C. clubs (Centennial, Cowichan Lake, and Esquimalt in this issue). Two other items of interest: a report on the Chinese UCM Fellowship of Vancouver, and one on a UCM-Anglican

Fellowship in the Shawnigan Lake-Mill Bay charge. So the Handshake is off and running and doing a fine job of promoting AOTS in British Columbia.

A Parisian and his American date were sitting on the sofa. The lights were low. "Je t'adore!" whispered the amorous Frenchman. "Shut it yourself!" replied the lady.

Fairfield AOTS Newsletter, April-June 1982.

Alberta Conference

St. James U.C., Edmonton (#458), secretary George Robertson sending two letter reports. The February meeting was used for a self-examination: to question their purpose and rôle in the church. In March they heard a talk on Edmonton's Bissell Centre, a ministry of the church to transients, the homeless and victims of our various social problems. The club voted a donation to Bissell. Ladies Night is scheduled for April 28th.

Saskatchewan Conference

Lakeview U.C., Regina (#315), secretary-treasurer Howard Riddell reporting. The programs of the dinner meetings of January and March were on much the same topic: "Crime and Punishment" by guest speaker Mr. Justice Brownridge, then one on the work of a police officer with the young people of a collegiate. Ladies Night was in February and the evening included a tour of historic Saskatchewan House. We learned from Howard by telephone that the annual spring dinner for the congregation and community (May 8th) was a great success. Over 600 people were served and upwards of \$1200 raised. The men, of course, did all the work. This is their main fund-raising event.

An item of unusual interest reported by Howard is that 1st vice president Dan Donison is to be inducted into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame. The ceremony takes place in June and is in recognition of Dan's record as a wrestler in amateur middleweight competition. Congratulations! (Knowing this I suspect that no one will dare to vote against him come the election for 1983 president in November.)

And in other news:

An area event of note was the awarding of a Life Membership in the National Association to Lakeview's Howard Riddell. The plaque was presented by Al Smith, national executive secretary, at the Regina AOTS District Council's annual Spring Rally held at Knox/Metropolitan Church on April 2nd. This was in recognition of Howard's long service to AOTS, both at the local and district level, his fellow members saying of him that "he is the one who keeps it alive and well". Earlier, at Lakeview's March meeting, a scroll signifying honorary membership in the club had been presented to Howard's wife Edith in appreciation of her many years of support of the club's activities.

A further note on the Spring Rally, the theme speaker was Rev. Owen Still, and his topic: "Getting the Most Out of Life". Although this is a Regina event men came from as far away as Moose Jaw.

St. Andrew's U.C., Moose Jaw (#158), Bill Taylor's monthly "Menu" (Vol. 24!!), January to April. Ladies Night was in January and members were reminded (?) "to bring your wife!" (you have to do this, eh Bill?). The program included an illustrated talk on Egypt and installation of officers for 1982. Ron Austin takes over as president. Other events (additional to the monthly supper meetings): Family Youth Night (February 16), reported to have been very successful, attracting an unexpectedly large turnout of about 200!; the men conducted the Sunday service on February 21st; Annual Pancake Supper and Bake Sale (March 6, netting them about \$500); Moose Jaw and District Rally (May 6), with

Alan Staig (Associate Secretary, Ministry With Adults, Division of Mission in Canada) as guest speaker. Further away is the Banff Conference in October, men of South Saskatchewan hosting this year's event. 10 members attended last year. Two fund-raising results for 1981: over \$2000 net from nut sales, and \$670 from the sale of Canada Savings Bonds.

Manitoba Conference

We have a bit of news from minutes of the Manitoba District Council. Those for February 2nd reported that a one-minute silence was observed in memory of president Pat Hendy, who died in January (see last Newsletter, page 4). Pat was succeeded by Stan Babcock of Westworth U.C. AOTS. Unlike the experience in many other areas, the sale of AOTS nuts has not been especially rewarding in Winnipeg and so the Council has under consideration several alternative methods for raising money.

National executive secretary, Al Smith, was guest speaker at the April 5th meeting. He reported on AOTS activities in other areas, reminded Council members of the need to reach out to all men, especially young men, for AOTS, spoke a bit about the financial needs at the national level, and noted that 1983 would mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of AOTS (see last Newsletter, page 22).

Manitou Conference

Trinity U.C., North Bay (#194), a report from secretary R. Brewer. 1982 marks "100 Years of Rail" at North Bay and, as well, the 100th anniversary of Trinity United (originally a Methodist church). In celebration of this both the city and the Church have planned a number of events, the Church program having something exciting for each month of the year. The following invitation is extended to everyone:

"During this special year, the congregation will take the time to look back and to recognize the contributions of the twenty-two ministers who have served the church since 1882. This event has also provided the opportunity to invite special guest speakers (the Rt. Rev. Lois Wilson visited in March) who can discuss the present-day church, and provide some insight into the role of the United Church of Canada in the future.

The highlight of the year's events will be a gala 'HOMECOMING' on the 24th of May week-end. Bob McClure will be the guest of honour; there will be a Saturday night dance; a special Sunday service which will include the dedication of seven stained glass 'Pioneer' windows; a Monday morning 'Brunch'; and of course lots of time to socialize with old friends.

Trinity's AOTS members have been actively supporting the various activities, and although we are busy, we are never too busy to greet our friends from other clubs. So if you are holidaying in the North Bay area or just passing through, drop in to Trinity and join us in our Centennial Celebrations. We'll try to make you feel 'at home'."

St. Luke's U.C., Sudbury (#157), Clarence Campbell reporting. A number of interesting topics chosen for their Saturday morning monthly breakfast meetings: in December, with the ladies invited, "Marriage Enrichment", which he said got everyone interested and involved; in January, "New Goals for Personal Fulfillment in 1982"; February, "Communicating Our Faith in a World of Turmoil"; and in March, "Acid Rain". April is the month for their major fund-raising event, the 25th Annual Jiggs Dinner, in which a menu featuring corned beef and cabbage is served by the men to about 500 people.

"28.350 grams of prevention is worth 0.45360 kilograms of cure (to 5 significant figures)"
 Courtesy, P. E. Trudeau.

Kapuskasung U.C., Kapuskasing (#599), a brief note from secretary Frank Anderson. The fellows meet monthly, the church Youth Group preparing and serving the meal! March 6th was the occasion for their annual fund-raising Pancake Brunch, again a very successful event said Frank.

Bay of Quinte Conference

St. Paul's U.C., Stirling (#235), Harold Hagerman's May newsletter. Programs this year have emphasized youth work. Continuing in this theme, the May speaker is Wendy Bogart of Ontario Pioneer Camps. Her talk on outdoor activities will feature the National Film Board's prize-winning "White-Water Canoeing". Because of its wide appeal the club is making this a family night. More than 125 attended the recent Ladies Night, one of the most successful ever. Coming in June: the annual auction sale. Harold reports that Allen Gibson has resigned as president, for health reasons, Evan Bogart moving up to take his place.

George Street U.C., Peterborough (#390), Larry Seili's monthly "Harambee" newsletters, February to April. "Everyone had a grand time", says Larry of Ladies Night (February), and guest speaker Doug Vaisey's subject, appropriately, was "Famous Women of Canada", which was informative and which he handled with wit and humour. Also in February, the annual Pancake Social. Topic of the March meeting was the needs and problems of senior citizens, and in April the emphasis was on youth, i.e., youth and the Christian way for living. Coming on May 8th: the Flea Market, an annual fund-raising event. Noted in their 1981 annual report: donations of \$635 to various community groups, mainly in support of youth activities.

Toronto Conference

Bellefair U.C., Toronto (#558), Harry Wolfrain's newsletters for March, April, and May. A field trip to the McLaughlin Planetarium was lined up for the March meeting, the show being "Exploration of the Ringed Planets, Uranus, Saturn, and Jupiter". Members were cautioned to "rest up in the afternoon" so as not to fall asleep in the lay-back seats! Other events (additional to the monthly meetings): May 9th - Mothers' Day Breakfast, June 28th - a Bar-B-Q for members and wives, and the annual fund-raising sale of maple syrup is now in full swing (netted \$1025 in 1981). Also note a move to share monthly meeting programming responsibilities similar to the scheme adopted by St. Paul's, Oakville (see Newsletter, February 1982, page 7). The concept here is a good one.

Don Mills U.C., Toronto (#784), Philip Foxley reporting. This is a small club of about 11 members but they have a full program of monthly meetings and projects. Among the latter are: painting and other jobs at the Ina Grafton Gage United Church Home (a senior ladies retirement home), various forms of assistance to a church member who is confined to a wheelchair, canvassing for the Cancer Society, and joint UCW/AOTS fund-raising dinners (one in February raising \$340 for the "furnace fund"). The March meeting featured a talk by a speaker for the Ontario Heart Foundation and the film "Live a Full Life", the club using this occasion to make a donation to the Foundation.

Wilmar Heights U.C., Toronto (#090), minutes of executive meetings for January and February. Lining up programs for the year, they report a Salvation Army speaker for February, a talk on gems for March, and the annual Easter Breakfast meeting for April. May is for youth work and a program related to hockey is the attraction. Noted in the 1981 annual report: donations of \$945 to community groups, \$2210 to church projects, with the money being raised by sale of nuts (\$925), Savings Bonds (\$3010), and Christmas trees (\$985) --- a very fine year.

In other news, we have a report on the 1982 Junior Choir Festival, an annual event sponsored by Toronto Conference AOTS and held this year on March 7th at Asbury and West U.C. Five church choirs participated, Joan Bretney and Jane Craig adjudicating, and Sid Bagnall (Wilmar Heights) serving as MC for this afternoon event. Five clubs (Scarborough AOTS Glee Club, Kingston Road, Bellefair, Wilmar Heights, and North Runnymede) contributed financial support (total \$290 plus \$100 by the Conference AOTS) and the Bellefair and Wilmar Heights ladies, and others, supplied refreshments.

Hamilton Conference

Mount Hamilton U.C., Hamilton (#671), the Summit Christian AOTS Men's Club, president Frank Newstead reporting. Ian Deans, NDP MP for Hamilton Mountain, was guest speaker in March, talking about current economic problems and on how "the government has become remote from the people because people have become remote from the government". Thus, "only 60% of eligible Canadians vote ... so the government says 'what difference does it make?' and does what it wants." He said: "It's not only my responsibility to make sure this country works, it's yours." Coming up: May 15th - annual Garage and Yard Sale; May 19th - Father and Youth Night, guest speaker to be Jimmy Skye of the Six Nations reserve; and in June - the annual Strawberry Festival. This is the club's 20th anniversary year and a special program on this is planned for November.

St. Paul's U.C., Oakville (#103).

The new plan for sharing programming responsibilities is working well. In February - a talk on Korea and on the shipping of calves from Canada to Korea on a Boeing 747 (a typical load being 425 500-lb animals!!), a new business opportunity arising from the growing mechanization of farming in that country; and in April - "Car Care", a question-and-answer session on how to handle various maintenance and repair problems. Ladies Night (March) again a great evening, about 200 attending. The theme was "Come Home to Nova Scotia", and the dinner, song, and entertainment were in the maritime tradition (1982, of course, is "Old Home Summer" in Nova Scotia).

AGE

Age is a matter of the mind; if you don't mind, it doesn't matter!

Harambee (George Street AOTS), April 1982.

If you want to feel young --- be around young people.

If you want to feel old --- try to keep up to them!

St. Paul's, Stirling, AOTS Newsletter, May 1982.

London Conference

Victoria Avenue U.C., Chatham (#188), newsletters for February and March. This club meets monthly at a Sunday breakfast. In February the "Young Gospel Singers" (of Walpole Island Evangelistic Centre) sang for them, and a similar group, the "Gospelaires" (of Dresden), entertained at the March Ladies Night. In April - the annual "Son-Rise" breakfast on Easter Sunday. The club is again giving financial support to summer campers and donating money for uniforms, etc., for local Rovers and Path Finders. Also, as are some other Ontario clubs, they are offering financial assistance, if required, to members wishing to attend the annual Geneva Park Ontario Round-Up, April 23 - 25, to a maximum of \$85! It is no wonder they are so well represented at this weekend rally.

In Tri-County news (which refers to Essex, Kent, and Lambton counties of south-western Ontario) they are looking into two matters: a common song book that the clubs might put together and use, and a round-up for the Tri-County area itself, the trip to Geneva Park (near Orillia) being a very long one (over 400 miles) and many fellows can't make it.

Maritimes Conference

Gibson Memorial U.C., Fredericton, N.B. (#350), a letter from secretary-treasurer Maurice Wetmore. The fellows served 200 people at the annual Bean and Pancake Supper (February), a \$500 profit rewarding their efforts, and toured the new Point Lepreau nuclear power station in southern N.B. in a recent field trip. As reported last time, the club donated \$500 towards the sending of 9 scouts and 2 leaders to the 1981 Jamboree in Alberta, and Maurice enclosed a short report by one of the boys who attended.

The major Maritimes event at this time is the annual Men's Festival of Faith to be held at Mount Allison University, Sackville, N.B., May 14-16. Willard Proud (Cornwall, P.E.I.) sends information on this: "Scotty" Clarke, of Darien, Connecticut, as Apostle, will bring the message, speaking to the theme "He Liveth In Me"; Story Tellers are Fred W. Brown (Marysville, N.B.), Dr. Sheldon Cameron (Summerside, P.E.I.), and Major Roy White (Lower Sackville, N.S.); and the musical team is Rev. Ron Dempsey, Lorne White, and Russell Alcorn. The Chaplain is Rev. Fraser MacDonald and the Director Rev. Paul Cumming. Both Gordon Hall, our national president, and Alan Staig plan to attend.

Willard also reports that Henry Clarke and Gary MacDougall are promoting a public speaking contest for P.E.I. boys and girls. The finals are scheduled for late April.

Newfoundland and Labrador Conference

St. Anthony U.C., St. Anthony (#785), a letter report from secretary Watson Tucker. Describing their meetings, he said they have a prayer and bible study period 7:30 to 8:30, club business 8:30 to 9:30, then a lunch and fellowship period to conclude the evening --- a rather different format than many of us are used to. Among their charitable works in 1981: donated a new PA system to the church, supported two foster children (a boy in the Philippines, a girl in Israel), donations to a multi-purpose room in a senior citizens' home, and organization of a prayer group in support of summer evangelical crusades. One 1981 meeting was held in nearby Raleigh where they hope to see a new AOTS club form.

Grace U.C., Springdale (#187), William Hickman reporting. An important piece of news that is much to the credit of this club is their sponsoring of new clubs at Happy Valley U.C., Happy Valley, and at Carol U.C., Labrador City, both in Labrador (see last Newsletter, page 2). A delegation is to visit these new clubs in late April to present the charters. Recent meetings topics: January - a talk on fire prevention, and in February, films by a member on his annual trip to the Labrador fishery and on the whales trapped in Halls Bay (Springdale) about 3 years ago.

Other news comes by way of the Central Newfoundland District Council minutes of February 20th, these including brief reports on the following:

Botwood U.C., Botwood (#023) - 54 members and wives attended the annual Ladies Night, at which each lady was presented with a gift. Melvin Bessey was elected 1982 president. A particularly sad event was the loss of two Botwood men in the sinking of the oil rig Ocean Ranger.

Windsor U.C., Windsor (#461) - once a month the club takes the Sunday evening service and members regularly visit the sick and shut-ins unable to attend church. They sponsor a child in Malaysia. Former secretary Woodrow Freake has moved to Toronto.

Bishop's Falls U.C., Bishop's Falls (#215) - this club carries on despite several difficulties, one of which was being without a president for two months. They have raised money through a Christmas Candy Sale and a Snowshoe-a-thon to help meet a \$1000 pledge to Loon Bay Camp, and the men have taken several Sunday evening services.

St. Matthew's U.C., Lewisporte (#324) - this club also ministers to the sick and shut-ins and tapes church services for them. The members sponsored the new Twillingate club, and have met in fellowship with new men's clubs at Campbellton-Loon Bay and Comfort Cove-Newstead. It is hoped that these latter will also affiliate with AOTS. The club serves on a community committee to investigate the plight of needy families in the area.

Memorial U.C., Grand Falls (#566A) - they too are working to meet a commitment to Loon Bay Camp, via a Bean and Pancake Supper and a Jumble Sale.

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAM

Jack Durham, Hamilton, Bermuda, Individual Member, member and president of Wesley AOTS Men's Club, January, 1982.

Norman Hunt, Hamilton, Ontario, member of Summit Christian AOTS Men's Club of Mount Hamilton U.C., January 22, 1982.

Floyd Banting, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, member and former president of St. Andrew's U.C. AOTS Men's Club, March, 1982.

George Cunningham, Victoria, British Columbia, member of Fairfield U.C. AOTS Men's Club, March, 1982.

Erskine Edward Dyer, Hamilton, Bermuda, member, former president, and secretary-treasurer of Wesley AOTS Men's Club, March 5, 1982, in his 73rd year.

Fred Nichols, Victoria, British Columbia, long-time member and former president of Fairfield U.C. AOTS Men's Club, April 12, 1982, at age 77.

* * * * *

Bermuda Flag Donated to National Association

Executive secretary Al Smith advises that Life Member Alex Darrell of Toronto has donated a Bermuda flag to the National Association in memory of the late Jack Durham, Erskine Dyer, and Sylvester Lee. These men were Individual Members resident in Bermuda. The new flag will join a new set of Canadian and provincial flags recently purchased for use at national conventions.

PROFILE: Alan Staig, Staff Person, Ministry With Adults, Division of Mission in Canada, The United Church of Canada.

This is a brief sketch of a person you should know, if you haven't already met him. He serves as a liaison officer between the National Association and the Church. He is also a frequent contributor to the Newsletter.

From London, England, and holding an engineering degree from London University, Alan is a professional engineer of the Province of Ontario and for 32 years practised that profession first in England and then in Canada. In church affairs, Alan has been an elder of Cliffcrest United Church in Scarborough for the past 24 years, and has served that congregation in a variety of ways. He is married, has three married daughters, and two granddaughters.

Alan is a past president of two AOTS men's clubs, one in Ontario and one in Newfoundland (where he worked for three years as an engineer). He has been a member of the Toronto Area Presbytery for 18 years, and has served on several boards and committees of Presbytery, Conference, and General Council. He assumed his present position in July 1979. His responsibility for Ministry with Adults includes AOTS and other men's clubs, laity concerns (both within and beyond the church), and societal issues such as alcohol and drugs.

MEMO from: Alan Staig - "On being a leader ..."

An overworked and little-understood phrase is "leadership development". Because so many of us are thrust into positions of leadership, or because some of us claim it, we need to recognize some of the indicators of success. Even if you are not a leader right now, it helps to know what your leaders are doing, and why.

To be a leader entails working with others in a team, seeing to it that the team does what is required of it, initiating ideas and plans, following through on them, and accepting responsibility for what happens. It is a difficult role, fascinating, frustrating and infinitely rewarding.

Whether you are heading up a three-man group to plan next month's AOTS meeting, or whether you are president of the club, you must fill two roles at the same time, each of which is in conflict with the other.

On the one hand, you find that the role of a "chairman" is to maintain order at meetings and to declare the results of votes. He has no vote himself, and should not participate in debates. To maintain order, he needs to be familiar with the Rules of Order (Roberts and Bourninot are two well-known and very similar authorities).

On the other hand, the chairman is usually the visible representative or spokesman for the group; he must accept responsibility for interpreting his group's work and positions and must be ready to initiate programs and ideas. This is a tight-rope act. Here are a few brief pointers to success:

1. Understand clearly the task of the group you lead.
2. Encourage those you lead to be idea-generators.
3. Learn the Rules of Order, and firmly, but kindly, enforce them.
4. Learn to speak in public with confidence and clarity.
5. Be ready to initiate schemes and plans, but always present them to your group as suggestions, for formal acceptance (or not, as the case may be).
6. Accept as essential the need to delegate and share tasks and rewards.
7. Be generous with praise (when it is earned) but be ready to chastise if that is necessary; with volunteers, that requires great sensitivity.
8. Be an enthusiast; without that, your leadership will surely fail.
9. Be diligent and joyful in all that you do.
10. Study leadership styles in others, and identify the effective ones.

Most public libraries have good books on this subject, which may help you --- but remember that you cannot learn to swim without getting wet. All of us are in contact with leaders of all kinds in our day-to-day living; make it a practice to study and evaluate their styles of leading, and then design your own model.

May God bless you richly in the things that you do.

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(continued from page 16) ... ought to be particularly adept in opening themselves to the unusual or uncomfortable point of view, not because it is necessarily any more right than the familiar, but because it is only through a running debate between the various views involved that one can hope to understand and feel something like the full truth.

The Kingdom of God is not to be equated with the poor and what they may be saying or hoping, any more than it is with the rich. But God's bias in favour of the poor indicates to us who are relatively rich that it is as we learn to know our world through the eyes of the poor that we are more likely to lay a true hold on that one Kingdom, for whose coming all human beings, rich and poor alike, can pray with equal loyalty and hope.

The National Program Committee, Jack Cleave chairman, offers the following suggestions for your meetings. First they ask:

Is your club having trouble? Perhaps you should look at changing the time or date. These have proven successful in some areas:

- a Saturday morning breakfast meeting, 8 to 10 AM;
- a Saturday evening dinner, 5 to 8 PM.

Suggested program ideas:

"Family Law Reform Act" (Ontario), how it affects individuals. A lawyer might be asked to speak to this. Copies of the Act are available from the provincial government. Similar acts are no doubt in effect in other provinces, with perhaps major changes having been made in the last little while.

"Alcohol and Drug Concerns". The person to contact in Ontario is: Rev. Karl Burden, Director, Alcohol and Drug Concerns Inc., 15 Gervais Drive, Don Mills, Ontario, M3C 1Y8. Rev. Burden will refer you to a speaker in your area.

"Confronting Death". Your local mortician could speak to this and give you a very informative and interesting meeting. This is a matter we should deal with ahead of time but one we tend to avoid.

"Travelling Gavel or Cross". Do you have this in your area? This is a tool for promoting interest in the local club through inter-club meetings.

Keep your programs interesting; they are one of the keys to a successful club, says Jack.

A further note comes from the Committee. We are reminded of the resolution passed at the Calgary convention which called on local clubs to study the report: "In God's Image ... Male and Female", and that we forward our comments to the National AOTS Council (c/o Al Smith, executive secretary). So, please hereby be reminded! And, of course, this study should be made very soon if your comments are to be brought to the attention of General Council because it meets this summer. (See National Newsletter, November 1981, page 8, for a copy of the resolution.)

And speaking of resolutions, the one on "Church Government" that was passed at the Calgary convention has been passed on to the executive of General Council and is now under study. This is reported in The Observer (February 1982, page 12), the news item saying, in part: "The sub-executive has asked the senior management team of Church House to research the issue and report to the full Executive".

And, finally, a word about the Calgary convention itself, the Record of Proceedings has now issued. Copies have been sent to everyone who attended, to the president or secretary of every club, and to all Individual Members. We suggest you lay hold on the nearest copy and read for yourself the transcript of the theme address by Rev. Alan Reynolds, Ryerson U.C., Vancouver. [Needless to say, you will find this a good deal more accurate than the report we offered in the November 1981 Newsletter.] We urge that you do this; it will be time well spent.

* * * * *

It is common to hear ministers speak of "the living God". What is meant by these words? According to Paul Tillich, one of the great theologian-philosophers, God does not exist, and cannot exist because he is the Ground of all existence. He puts it this way: "However it is defined, the 'existence of God' contradicts the idea of a creative ground of essence and existence. The ground of being cannot be found within the totality of beings ... God does not exist. He is being --- itself beyond essence and existence. Therefore to argue that God exists is to deny him."

Quoted by Nathaniel Micklem in "Ultimate Questions", Forward Movement Publications, 1966, page 40.

Laity Exchange

[Note: Because this topic is important and of current interest Conway's paper has been reproduced for readers of the Newsletter. It is taken from Laity Exchange of February, 1982, Mark Gibbs editor.]

IS GOD BIASED IN FAVOUR OF THE POOR?

Martin Conway

[Mr. Martin Conway is an Anglican layman and executive secretary of the Division of Ecumenical Affairs of the British Council of Churches.]

Like it or not we are going to hear a great deal more about the poor. The 1981 riots in our inner cities-Bristol, Liverpool and London - have driven home, among other things, Peter Townsend's finding (in his monumental Poverty in the United Kingdom, Pelican, 1979) that a quarter of the British people live in or near intolerable poverty. The mean-spirited response to the Brandt report in most of the wealthier nations can only lead to the words and actions of many in the Third World becoming harsher towards us. The ugly realities of poverty will not conveniently go away.

I now realise that for several years I let phrases like a preferential option for the poor wash over me with at best a half-hearted assent that never led to decisive action. Why? Perhaps because it sounded rhetorical; and I am one of those who much prefer to talk in evidence rather than in slogans. Perhaps even more because it had the ring of a one-sided, even fanatical political commitment that took no account of the genuine values in my sort of civilisation.

At a yet deeper level I suspect I have been hesitant about a language and an outlook that seemed to result chiefly in a heightening of a sense of guilt in (comparatively) educated, rich, white Westerners like myself. Are blistering accusations, even if justified, the appropriate way to get people to take daring and costly steps? Don't they rather drive us another twist down the paralysing spiral of self-hatred?

I must witness that the 1980 Melbourne conference of the World Council of Churches proved for me a time of conversion. I was convinced by the repeated arguments from many different speakers that in the experience of the poor there is a vital entry into knowledge of God's Kingdom.

IS GOD BIASED?

The obvious answer must be a resounding yes. The Bible, to start there, is full of references to the poor in contexts that bring out God's love and care for them. It is of course more complex than that. On a quick survey I reckon one can see at least seven interweaving strands.

- (1) In passages such as James 2 and Job 29 there are references to the virtue of giving to the poor such as is stressed in most cultures.
- (2) But in say Exodus 23 and Deuteronomy 24 Israel is exhorted to ensure justice for the poor, not just as a general virtue but in remembrance of the fact that 'you were slaves in Egypt'; Nathan's parable in II Samuel 12 and Jesus' story of Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16) drives this home.
- (3) Several of Jesus' references to the poor are essentially warnings about the dangers of wealth - Mark 10.21 or Luke 14.16ff - and

Al.....

- (4) In the trenchant comments of Amos (passim), Isaiah (3¹⁴) and Jeremiah (2³⁴) it becomes clear that Israel's treatment of the poor is a crucial criterion for their standing in the sight of God. More positively,
- (5) The Isaiah 5 passages that Jesus drew on for his description of his vocation (Luke 4.18 and Matthew 11.5) see the preaching of good news to the poor as central, but there are also
- (6) Undeniable pointers that the poor are likely to get decisive priorities right (Luke 21.2 and Matthew 5.3) in a way that most others don't.
- (7) Above all in the psalms there is the constant conviction that whatever the present appearances God is caring for the poor and will in his good time vindicate them - the poor seen as the criterion of hope in God's ultimate goodness.

None of this is in any way a justification or glorification of poverty. On the contrary, poverty is as abhorrent to God as it is to those trapped in it. Yet the images of the Kingdom are not so much of wealth as of justice, of peace, of contentment, of human fulfillment, with a lesser priority for the trappings of affluence, delightful as these are (see e.g. Isaiah 35, Micah 4, Matthew 20 and Revelation 21). Ease and affluence are known to be desirable but not commended in and for themselves.

JUST WHO DO WE MEAN BY THE POOR?

I can do no more than list a number of points that have made a lot of sense to me.

1. Poverty cannot simply be measured in quantitative or numerical terms. The sting of it, as Townsend shows, is in 'relative deprivation', i.e. having inadequate resources to make possible the style of living expected in the community at large and thus being excluded from 'normal' living. Poverty is a result of unequal distribution, combined with pressures to conform to a certain style or level, and thus with expectations that cannot be satisfied by being at the bottom of the social heap. This is the case as much for young blacks in our inner-cities, who feel excluded from what British society assumes as 'normal' in job and housing prospects, as for the Group of 77 Third World nations who find the terms of international trade weighted against them. The frustrations involved in being poor and the changes that have to be made to overcome poverty have as much to do with social acceptance in the community as a whole, and with genuine political participation, as with material goods and possessions.
2. The human race has inherited a situation, already acquiesced in for far too long, where privileged minorities keep for themselves so much of the wealth, the know-how, the prestige and the control, that the majority of people have no more than a limited access to what are considered the desirable goods. This essentially competitive framework is so taken for granted that most of us at the richer end of the scale cannot imagine that things could be fundamentally otherwise. Such assumptions are deeply insidious, especially in the ways by which so often even the 'caring professions' so arrange the structure of their work that those giving service do better out of it than their clients, whether they work in medical or educational or international aid projects.

This is where Marxist talk of an inevitable class warfare, for all its oversimplified sloganising, is too near the truth to be ignored. Poverty has as much to do with us who are comparatively rich as with those who are poor. While

there is little good in suggesting that we can individually and immediately do what is necessary to overcome it, nonetheless it is the whole social and economic structure that must be reconsidered and remade, not just other people's parts of it.

3. There is an important anxiety about the mis-match between economic goals and the human values and relationships which make life worth living. Jeremy Seabrook has analysed this: "In the boredom of the young who have been given the best of everything but complain that there is nothing for them to do; in the sourness and resentment of old working class communities; in the fatalism of so many working people as they acquiesce in the loss, for ever, of the skills won with such pain and effort" (New Society, 28 Feb 1980).

We urgently need to work out criteria for the health and growth of the total human family that are not primarily economic, and which can serve as horizon and control on purely economic activities. For all of us today, in Botswana or Bournemouth as in Brixton, live within a world-wide human setting. "The world has become too small for any of us to consider someone else as a foreigner", said Pope John XXIII.

4. In particular we in Britain, for all our deep love and pride in our past, are having to learn that our liberal tradition is not enough for facing the greater dangers of today, let alone for reaching the greater promise of tomorrow. It has had a long innings over the last 100 or more years, but it has too often failed for us to see it as adequate - as our present unemployment crisis should be teaching us. This is not to deny many of the values in it: our sense of the dignity of the individual and the individual family, our commitment to education, our suspicion of all kinds of dictators. But it is already clear, in Britain quite as much as in the world as a whole, that we need a much tougher analysis of why we have reached our present social and economic situation, and a wider and more common set of agreements on the appropriate way ahead. The rich cannot be encouraged to go on deciding things by themselves.

5. For the greatest need today, among the richer as much as the poorer, is a real hope, a belief that a humanly richer, more rewarding and more fulfilling (not necessarily wealthier) life lies ahead of us and our children. It is all too easy to see disaster looming from several sides, and so to put more effort into staving off those troubles (which can mean pushing them off onto someone else) than into imagining and fashioning a future promising for all. Any genuine hope must be for all, not just for 'our own sort' - which makes much British nostalgia for the good old days more part of the problem than of the answer. Hope is poles apart from idle or sectarian dreaming. But where can it be discovered, and how can it be shared?

THE CHRISTIAN TASK AS LIGHTING CANDLES OF HOPE

This is where I am sent straight back to God's bias for the poor. This is not a bias against the rich: Dives' brothers would be welcome in Abraham's bosom if they could only change their ways. God's Kingdom is for all, and because it is God's it can nourish hope even in face of the cruellest poverty or of nuclear suicide. But a hope grounded in God's Kingdom can only be had on God's terms, i.e. that those who pursue such a hope - the Church - are more concerned for the total human community than for themselves. This runs slap into one of the deepest conditionings of our "modern" culture, namely that the highest goals are in individual and private satisfactions: a comfortable home, lots of consumer goods and educational or travel opportunities combined with maximum security from violence or unwanted change. Hope derived from faith in God's Kingdom must go along with the struggle to play a part in the larger social political issues of the day and be geared to discernment and obedience within that.

And, second, that Christians must learn to look out on this world as Jesus did, from the margins, through the eyes of those who don't count. It is through the eyes of the poor that we Christians can discover how the promise of God's Kingdom can best be translated into actual hope, into decisions and actions, however small-scale, that can light a lasting candle amid the gloom.

In Christian obedience there are always two options. The one seeks to go all the way, in costly sacrifice, seeking a purity of heart and will. Here are the monks, the pacifists, the protestors, and the church would be greatly the poorer without them. But there is also the way of involvement and of responsibility, a way the more risky and dangerous because it appears (and often is) less immediately costly. This is the way most lay Christians cannot but take. Its essence is living by repentance, its password 'God be merciful to me a sinner'. The overcoming of poverty is such a long-range task, involving so many facets of human life and tradition, that we need the fullest possible contribution from both sets of people.

SOME PRACTICAL STEPS

So what, finally, can I suggest that we white Western Christians do? God's bias suggests to me at least some ways by which we, as individuals and still more as groups and congregations, can begin to reflect and grow into the liberating intent of his bias.

Go to learn. We don't have to go very far nowadays to meet people pushed out into the margins of society or the economy - an inner-city side-street, a housing estate - and yet it is astonishing how easy it is to avoid doing so. The point of going is not in the first instance to do anything, but simply to meet people, to listen to them as persons who are always more than statistics or types, and so to enter into a compassion, a feeling with them about the forces which shape their situation, and a genuine understanding which is the only adequate basis for eventual common action.

Take a share in the struggle. Once we have begun to see through the eyes of the poor it will be natural to take some small but actual share in their struggle. Just what this is hardly matters provided it is what they would wish. This is not a matter of imposing one's own standards - but of imagining, together, what God's Kingdom suggests.

In your own choices anticipate a way of living that can be universalised. We who are comparatively well off constantly fail to realise how much the standards and style of living we have chosen actively cause other people to suffer. Often this has less to do with the sheer level of consumption than with our use of social goods, e.g. health care, transport or education, and our readiness to pay for those in taxes. Moreover there is little doubt that affluence brings a level of financial and consumer preoccupations that can spiritually crowd out more important aspects of human community.

Claim the freedom to speak the truth. One of the most insidious powers at work in today's world is the power of current ideologies to hide away inconvenient facts and questions, a power all the more insidious because its more obvious servants - politicians and media people, for instance - often don't realise they are doing so. Here my visits to East Germany have been deeply instructive, where the official state ideology is massively conveyed by every newspaper yet where almost all the population can watch West German TV and so come to their own conclusions - not necessarily those of either state! We need something comparable in Britain between the black and white communities. Christians, whose loyalty is to a Lord above all earthly powers and to a Kingdom that is not of this world,

(concluded on page 11)

We have the following piece from Reg Attwell (Nanaimo, B.C.), chairman of the National Spiritual Life Committee. He offers this believing "that these ideas and suggestions will enrich not only our clubs but will also uplift and enhance the lives of each person". He calls it "RECIPES FOR LIFE".

"Devotional Period at Club Meetings

The Devotional Time is both a 'Stabilizer' and an 'Energizer'.

We suggest that the Devotional Chairman and the Program Chairman could work together, prior to the meeting, so that the devotion could be geared to the program for the evening, e.g., 'the Junior Choir are to be the guests at the meeting ... the Devotional directed to youth'.

We have found that long drawn-out readings, either from the Bible or other sources, do not constitute good devotional periods, as these lead to 'mind-wandering'. Rather, the devotions should be concise.

We recommend that various members of the club be given the opportunity to present the devotions throughout the year (particularly the fellow who is usually quiet!), with the help and support of the Devotions Chairman and others of the club executive. This is a real opportunity for personal growth.

The devotional period at club meetings draws the members closer together as Christian men, and it helps us to recognize 'who we are' and 'whose we are'.

For the Enrichment of Your Life

When you return home from a busy day at your work, take a few minutes to read quietly a chapter or two from a devotional book, such as 'Prophets/Now' by Leslie Brandt. It will do wonders for you (and for your family). Remember that your devotional life can be an integral part of your DAILY LIVING, if you will allow it to be.

In B.C. (where we live) Naramata Training Centre has published the schedule of Summer Programs. We feel sure that the training centre in your area also has summer programs available. Why not check these out as something to be included in your vacation plans; you will be well rewarded!!

The following books are suggested for personal enrichment and spiritual growth, as well as a resource for meditations and devotional periods:

CREATIVE BROODING - Robert Raines	AN EVERYDAY GOD - Jim Taylor
SOUNDINGS - Robert Raines	HABITATION OF DRAGONS - Keith Miller

PEACE TO YOU ALL! National Spiritual Life Committee"

* * * * *

"The concept that "wealth is theft" must be repudiated. It now lurks, implicitly, in most of the political statements we hear. Wealth can indeed be stolen, but only after it has been produced, and the difference between stolen wealth and produced wealth is critical. If a man ... has earned his income honorably, by the voluntary exchange of goods and services, he is not a criminal or a second-class citizen and should not be treated as such. Conversely, the concept that the absence of money implies some sort of virtue should be repudiated. Poverty may result from honest misfortune, but it also may result from sloth, incompetence, and dishonesty. It is a virtue to assist those who are in acute need through no fault of their own, but it is folly to glamorize men simply because they are penniless."

William E. Simon, "A Time For Truth", McGraw-Hill, 1978.

"The end cannot justify the means for the simple and obvious reason that the means employed determine the nature of the ends produced."
Aldous Huxley.

Annual Financial Statement of the National Association, 1981.

Balance, December 31, 1980, general account \$ 455.16

Receipts

Membership dues (@ \$5.00/member):	Clubs	Members		
Club members - for 1980/82	3	131	655.00	
for 1981	82	1943	9715.00	
for 1981 (donations)	5	88	310.00	
			<u>10680.00</u>	
Individual members			525.00	11205.00
Life memberships				0.00
Contributions				1626.37
Second Mile Support				5580.75
Grant, Division of Mission in Canada				6000.00
Sale of supplies				1448.67
Interest				94.01
Miscellaneous income				336.67
Internal transfer				2000.00
				<u>28291.47</u>

Disbursements

Executive Secretary, salary				8400.00
Employee benefits				0.00
Office expenses				1820.85
Telephone				586.08
Postage				421.77
Travel:	Executive Secretary		1528.50	
	National President		174.00	
	Regional Vice Presidents		1464.34	3166.84
Meetings:	Annual (one)		10263.67	
	Executive (five)		902.75	
	Sub Executive (two)		108.00	11274.42
Newsletter				1008.97
Supplies for resale				542.33
Conference funds				285.51
Committees				189.24
Travel advances				300.00
Miscellaneous				51.15
				<u>28047.16</u>

Balance, December 31, 1981, general account (Royal C/A) 699.47

Reserve fund (Royal S/A) 229.55

Harry Colnett Memorial Fund

Balance, December 31, 1980 10405.96

Receipts

Individuals	85.00
Clubs	25.00
Ontario AOTS Round-Up offering	503.50
National Convention offering	471.89
Interest	1188.02
	<u>2273.41</u>

Disbursements

Nil

<u>Balance</u> , December 31, 1981:	Royal S/A	3679.37	
	Debentures	<u>9000.00</u>	12679.37

1982 Ontario AOTS Round-Up, Geneva Park, Orillia, April 23 - 25.

The major happening of this spring in Ontario was the annual round-up. Always a popular event and great "battery charger", this year's round-up will be remembered as one of the best. The theme was "Growth Through Service", the theme speaker Rev. Charles Buchanan, Roslin-Thomasburg charge, Plainfield; Rev. Bob Rowlands, Westminster U.C., Belleville, conducted the Sunday morning communion service; and the Watson family led us in music: Craig the leader and MC, Betty at the piano, and son Jim both as vocalist and trumpet player. The men of Bay of Quinte Conference were hosts under Jack Arthur as chairman. The attendance was about 155 (the attendance award going to the Westminster club with 14 present), and the weather was perfect!

Both Charlie Buchanan and Bob Rowlands spoke about "growth" in terms of evangelism, Charlie noting that if we are to grow and become mature individuals there must be nourishment of the spirit as well as the body, else we are unable to deal effectively with life's problems. We can contribute to this, he said, through evangelism --- the process whereby we bring another person closer to God. Unhappily, too many of us are reluctant to talk about our faith, even to talk about our AOTS. Yet, contact with God, he said, is not a "one-shot deal" (as some think of Baptism) but a continuing recommitting renewing process, and it thrives on our talking about it with one another.

Bob Rowlands observed that while most would agree that evangelism is the primary responsibility of the church we are not very clear as to what it means in specific terms. In fact, some say it is everything that we do --- hardly a helpful concept. It is not, he said, living a good life and being "the good example", nor is it prophecy or social action or Christian education --- though these are important and may contribute to it. Quoting Dr. Temple, archbishop of Canterbury, that evangelism is "the winning of men to acknowledge Christ as personal saviour and king so that they may give themselves to his service in the fellowship of his church", he said that it has to be sold, that we have to talk to people, and that a decision has to be made. Most opposition to evangelism comes, he said, from the church itself, from the pulpits! He offered four reasons for this:

- some say it is unsophisticated and non-intellectual --- which, he said, reflects a kind of snobbery;
- an unwillingness or inability to talk about our faith --- out of fear or embarrassment, he said;
- a dislike of the "techniques": altar calls, hypnosis in song, etc. --- which, he said, was partly "sour grapes", jealousy over the growth that some Christian groups are achieving. He quoted well-known evangelist Dwight Moody who, in response to criticism of his methods, said: "I like my way of doing it better than your way of not doing it";
- that it was not necessary, even wrong and intolerant, to convert people, that all will be saved anyway: "universalism" --- but, he said, Jesus never said this, that his was a call to evangelism, a call to become "fishers of men" and to "go into all the world to carry out that mission.

Also on the program in this stimulating weekend:

- there were four devotionals, taken by Gary Wilson, Al Anthony, Alex McCurdy, and Allin Osborne, each presentation thoughtful and well done;
- two mini-concerts, one by the Watson family and one by the Quintones, a male quintet from Madoc, both very enjoyable;
- a panel discussion on AOTS problems and prospects, by Gordon Hall, national president, Ross Agar, central vice president, and Al Smith, executive secretary, the latter

"throwing out" a challenge to the men to support the Second Mile Fund. The result was a very satisfying \$1610 in pledges for 1983. The Sunday morning offering was also designated for the Second Mile Fund and the amount received was \$978.

Jack Arthur served as chairman throughout the weekend and did a fine job. The 1983 round-up will be hosted by London Conference under Lloyd Richards (Victoria Avenue U.C.) as chairman. The date, still tentative, is the weekend of April 29 to May 1.

Conspicuous by his absence from this year's Ontario round-up was Stan MacBeth. Stan, you will recall (see September 1980 Newsletter, page 13), is an unusually talented musician, playing the accordion, piano, and organ (and probably other instruments we don't know about). What makes his talent so remarkable is that Stan is blind! A year ago he suffered a stroke and was left with paralysis in his right side. He is still in hospital recovering from this affliction. So, in appreciation of the fine musical contribution he has made to previous meetings, this message from all the fellows speaking in unison was recorded and sent to him:

"Hello Stanley! We are missing you at the round-up this year.
May God bless you and bring you back here next year."

Bud Maxwell, a close friend and fellow member with Stan of the Kingston Road club, says that Stan is making a slow but steady recovery. Now at the Riverdale Hospital in Toronto and taking therapy twice daily, he is at the point where he can walk unassisted (though he is usually accompanied) but there is still some paralysis in his right arm and side. Despite his age (74) and this handicap (as well as blindness) he remains in good spirits and grateful for everyone's interest in how he is getting along. He has been able to get to some recent club meetings and has played the piano for song sessions with his left hand! At the next meeting, May 28th, he will be taking the devotional.

Stan has to be a great inspiration to all of us. We wish him all the best.

* * * * *

THE SCARBOROUGH AOTS GLEE CLUB looking ahead sees a big year coming up in '83:

- the 60th anniversary of AOTS (see last Newsletter, page 22),
- a National convention to be held in St. John's, Newfoundland, and
- the 25th anniversary of the Glee Club!

As a result, business manager Lorne Thornley sends the following message:

"Yes, the Glee Club is still singing along. We have 3 to 4 'meetings' a month, including engagements and practices. And, out of an active membership of 40 (2 women and 38 men) we average an attendance of 30. In addition, several of us are active members of AOTS clubs in 'home' churches, and sing in those church choirs as well. Also, there are seven or more who are officers and members in various Masonic Lodges.

We finish our 1982 pre-summer season singing for the Cheerio Club (visually handicapped) on April 27th, and for the Sunrise Seniors on May 26th. The fall season commences at the Ina Grafton Gage Lodge (a senior ladies residence) on September 21st, then the Markham Fair on October 3rd, Thompson House Seniors October 27th, Teston U.C. (110th anniversary) November 14th. December is reserved for special Christmas programs.

On the chance that we might be able to attend the 1983 National Convention, we are looking for ways to exchange musical notes for the Bank of Canada type to help finance the trip to St. John's. So we are open for invitations from clubs and church groups in southern Ontario who are willing to share the proceeds of fund-raising musical concerts, this fall, winter, and next spring. Anyone interested should contact me, Lorne Thornley, Business Manager, Scarborough AOTS Glee Club, 7 Innisdale Drive, Scarborough, M1R 1C4. We would like to hear from you!"

EditorialIs God biased in favour of the poor?

The United Church, as an institution, is involved in a number of complex and controversial so-called justice or human rights issues. Examples are the Nestle boycott, bank loans to South Africa, politics in Latin America, etc. The Church believes it has a theological mandate for such activity. For example, the report of the Committee on the Church and International Affairs (CC&IA) presented to the 28th General Council speaks of "our responsibility to bind up the wounds of the suffering and to relieve the distress of the poor and oppressed", says that the church ought to be "immersing itself in the world, complete with its suffering, chaos, injustice, disease, death and war, ... using all its knowledge and power to wipe out injustice ...", believing that "the world's goods are gifts of God to be shared among all". Why? Because Jesus identified this as his mission (Luke 4: 16-21) and said (Matt. 25: 40) "... as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me".

In pursuing this policy the Church makes the claim that God is biased in favour of the poor. Thus, Rev. Dr. Clarke MacDonald, secretary of the CC&IA (he and Rev. Garth Legge, secretary of the Division of World Outreach, are regarded as the two key people responsible for developing Church policy in international matters) puts it this way:

"The thread that runs through the Bible is that God is on the side of the weak and powerless. His concern is to liberate the oppressed. Through the prophets and his Son, he made plain this was the side he was on and that this is the side his disciples in the Church should be on." (The Observer, June 1980, page 15).

And again,

"The church which does not stand with the poor, cannot stand with Jesus who came to set at liberty the captives and the oppressed." (Ibid, October 1980, page 16).

Others make this claim too. Thus, on page 13 of this issue of the Newsletter there is reproduced an article from Laity Exchange of February 1982, entitled: "Is God Biased in Favour of the Poor?". The author, Martin Conway, says that the answer "must be a resounding yes". He notes, however, that this is not a bias against the rich, that God's Kingdom is for all, that they need only "change their ways".

But, is God biased in favour of the poor? Bias means prejudice, an irrational attitude, an unreasoned distortion of judgement; to say that God is biased is to make a very serious charge. For are we not all equal in the sight of God? Do we have the poor only because of the ways of the rich; might it not also be because of the ways of the poor? God may not approve of the way we use the gift of life but does that lead him to become biased in favour of one or the other? Is his love for us extended or withdrawn according to what we are or are not, according to what we do or fail to do? I think not, for Paul said that nothing --- and he could not have been more emphatic in this --- can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8: 38-39). Isaiah's words, which Jesus read aloud: "to preach good news to the poor ... to proclaim release to the captives ... to set at liberty those who are oppressed ..." (Luke 4: 18) are not saying that God is biased in favour of the poor, the captives, etc.; they are simply a statement of what we, as Christian men and women and servants of Christ, ought to do. To claim such bias is not only to deny some pretty fundamental Christian teaching but to polarize those working to solve our problems and, hence, to make more difficult their solution.

The fact is, we have poverty, oppression, etc. They are evidence of man's weak and sinful nature, one that ranges all the way from deliberate wrongdoing and injury to others to a genuine honest inability to cope with difficult physical and human problems. The elimination of poverty, oppression, etc., should be seen as a common task, one in

which we are all called to share, serving to the best of our ability, in a spirit of love and with responsibility and accountability. To superimpose on this the concept that some of us are more acceptable in the sight of God than are others is not only to introduce false teaching; it is, because we are human, almost certainly a recipe for failure.

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Gordon Hall, national president, and Alan Staig, Division of Mission in Canada, will be in Cyril Locke's (eastern vice president) stamping grounds in the latter part of May. Their "tour" starts at the Maritimes Conference Festival of Faith, which all three will attend, at Mt. Allison University in Sackville, N.B., May 14-16. There is then a parting of ways, Alan visiting other centres in New Brunswick, and Gordon and Cyril heading for Newfoundland. Alan plans to visit St. John, Fredericton, Newcastle, and Moncton, May 17 to 20, speaking to men's clubs in some places and contacting and meeting individuals in others. Gordon and Cyril have the following itinerary lined up:

- May 16 - with Cyril driving, by car to Sidney in Cape Breton, and ferry to Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland;
- May 17 - to contact and meet with AOTS men in Port Aux Basques;
- May 18 - by car to Pasadena (250 km) and a meeting with the new Humber Valley U.C. AOTS club, with men from the St. Paul's club in Deer Lake also present;
- May 19 - up the west coast of the Great Northern Peninsula to St. Anthony (450 km) and a meeting with the St. Anthony club;
- May 20 - back down the Peninsula and east to Cyril's home in Springdale (570 km) where Gordon will be guest speaker at the annual Ladies Night of the Grace U.C. club;
- May 21 - southeast to Grand Falls (120 km) and a meeting with the Central Newfoundland District Council, this concluding the visit.
- May 22, Saturday, Gordon leaves from Gander airport for home. So it will be a busy week for Gordon and Cyril, the travel in Newfoundland alone amounting to about 1500 km (900 mi).

Prior to the above trip, Alan Staig was at the Coastal Christian Men's Conference in Langley, B.C., April 30-May 2, after which he went to Prince George, B.C., Grand Prairie, Alberta, and Moose Jaw, Sask. He was guest speaker at men's rallies in Prince George and Moose Jaw, May 4 and 6.

Not wishing to feel "left at home", executive secretary Al Smith was on a brief jaunt also, taking in the spring rally of the Regina District Council, April 2, and a meeting with the Manitoba District Council on April 5th where he was guest speaker.

All of this indicates a positive effort to keep in touch with AOTS men's work right across the country. We hope this can continue despite the financial "crunch" that is everyone's lot to some degree these days.

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"Maybe elitism, too, should be called for the evil it is. You find it in the academic community, in the business sector, and in government. You find it, sadly, among social activists and labor leaders ... at 85 St. Clair and other church headquarters. You find it wherever people think they have a corner on truth. Somehow ... people who care deeply about an issue begin to believe that they know best what is good for others ... and that lack of consultation is necessary because the masses really don't know what's best for them anyway. Racism is ... a race or culture believing that it is superior to another and ... justified in imposing its politics, culture ... values ... on another. Elitism is the same thing, without the color, and therefore may be even more insidious."

Hugh McCullum, editor, The Observer, June 1980, page 3.

M. M. Wright,
May 16, 1982.