

# The Handshake

1989  
ROUNDUP SPEAKER

Reverend Kenneth D. Benner, OMM, CD, BA, Dip. Theol. was born in Orillia, Ontario in 1935 and spent his early years in Central Ontario.

Ken joined the Canadian Forces in 1952 as a private. He has remained in and been connected with the Forces ever since, serving at sea, on land, and in the air. Presently he holds the rank of Commander/Lieutenant Colonel in the Chaplaincy Branch (Protestant).

In 1960 Ken graduated from Mt. Allison University, Sackville, N.B., and following a year and a half at sea in minesweepers, he studied theology at Pine Hill Divinity Hall, Halifax, N.S., graduating in 1963. Ken married Joan Hickman of Glace Bay, N.S. and following ordination, Ken went to sea again for two years as the Skipper/Missionary of the U.C. Mission Vessel "Robert C. Scott" based out of the Buteedale B.C. Marine Mission on the west coast.

In 1966, Ken began a 22 year appointment to the permanent force Chaplaincy Branch of the Canadian Forces. Postings were all over the world with his final posting at HMCS Malahat in Victoria. He served as an active paratrooper with Airborne Ordinance, Canadian Airborne Regiment, and the Special Force. His final posting in the permanent force was as

CONTINUED.....

Senior Chaplain (Command Chaplain) for the Canadian Army working out of St. Hubert, P.Q. where he had some 200 chaplains in Canada and abroad under his administration and leadership.

Ken has taken courses in parachuting, instruction techniques, AV presentations, alcohol counselling, marriage preparation and Christian Education.

Ken has been an active member of presbyteries, Rotary, and a past member of AOTS (Esquimalt United).

Ken is the only United Church minister ever awarded the Order of Military Merit in the grade of Officer (OMM). This honour was presented in 1981 by the Governor General for Ken's work in the Airborne Regiment and the Special Service Force as Chaplain.

Presently Ken is in parish ministry at Qualicum Beach, B.C.

We are looking forward to hearing a dynamic message for men from Ken at THE ROUNDUP, March 11 & 12, 1989 at Gordon United Church, Victoria. Please mark the dates and plan to attend with at least one other friend.

CO-ED RELIGION IN LIFE PROGRAM WORKS WELL AT SOUTH BURNABY UNITED CHURCH

South Burnaby United Church has had a long history of supporting Scouting and Guiding through leadership, sponsorship, provision of facilities and

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offering Religion In Life Programs. In the fall of 1987 a new delivery process was found to be not only appealing to the Scouts and Guides but also trouble free and rewarding for the leaders.

Gwen Morse, closely associated with the Scouts and Guides, recruited 32 young people who registered in Stages 1, 2, & 3 of the RIL Program. Classes, held immediately before regularly scheduled Scout & Guide meeting times, consisted of 6 sessions. The various stages were taught at the same time. Leadership became a family endeavour when Phyllis, Keith, Peter and Penny Stainton offered to conduct the classes. Twenty nine of the class received their emblems at a very impressive church parade in February 1988 with the Rev. Ray Sadler officiating and Commissioners from the Scout and Guide groups in attendance.

Because the program delivery was very successful, yet involved a most reasonable committment of time from the participants, it will be continued in 1988 and hopefully beyond.

Bill Cumming

Program yourself for success, not failure; for joy, not despair; for love, not hate; for giving, not hoarding.



## DON'T STOP PRAYING

So you're tired of praying and not receiving answers. Don't give up. Someone once said that God has four answers - yes, no, grow, slow. In any event you will receive an answer. Expect the unexpected like a letter in the mail. The Father is full of surprises so relax and accept what happens.

My favourite method of communicating is to shoot up arrow prayers and sometimes while talking with people I will pray for discernment or wisdom. Often there are surprises like the morning I was doing my devotions and the subject was panning your day around God (not your job). I went to work and all hell broke loose over a press release. I grabbed the Deputy Minister's car and rushed to get down to the Minister's office. In doing so there were red lights and pedestrians jaywalking and I had anything but peace - when suddenly a question flooded my thinking - Who are you planning your day around? I knew it was the Lord so I stopped panicking and then and there got things into perspective.

Another time I had to write a complex press release for the Motor Vehicle Department. It was early morning and I wasn't quite awake but awake enough to pray. Sure enough the answer came - phone the legislative counsel, the lawyer who prepared the legislation. I did and received my answers.

Another way to pray is to lay a fleece like Gideon. My house was on the market for three months and I was wanting to go away on holidays. Finally, I said,

Lord, if this house doesn't sell by the end of this week I will assume you want me to stay and fix it up and I will take the sign down. The next day a man who was recently transferred from the services back east bought the house and met the price with no problem whatsoever. In other words, give your problem up to the Lord.

I've had other answers to prayer but the most beautiful answer can one night while talking quietly to the Lord at the kitchen table. I had just come from a church service and during the greeting time a lady told me she was in hell as her husband had threatened to kill her and her son who was just off drugs. I felt a terrific burden and prayed for the lady and her husband while in church and now here I was at the kitchen table asking the Lord what happens when we pray for a man who threatens to kill his wife and son. I became quiet and the Lord's thoughts filled my thinking ... when you pray you focus the light of the Holy Spirit into that man's darkness - making him aware of his sin, putting him under conviction. And I thought what power when you have many people praying. We can activate the most powerful force in the world and we don't even realize it. The light will do what it is meant to do whether it is healing, conviction or whatever. It is hard sometimes to have to wait for an answer but usually when it comes it is better than you could ever expect. I have been out of work since last November but the Lord has now opened a door whereby I will end up being editor of the Christian Info newspaper on Vancouver Island working with the Rev.

Ted Fellows, a truly wonderful man of God. It reminds me somewhat of Paul and Timothy. This is something I have been interested in for some time but the Lord doesn't rush into things, or have you noticed. He knows what is best for us and in waiting I have learned patience. Conclusion: The Father is more concerned with our spiritual growth and our physical well being. Think about that the next time you pray.

Charlie Shave

## ALDERGROVE SETS UP AOTS CLUB

Just before the summer break the men from Aldergrove United Church set up a club to become an AOTS organization in due time. Jack Shenton felt so strongly about this that he let his name stand President and he set up meetings on a regular basis through the months of July and August.

Although the numbers were not large (8-17) the group expressed much enthusiasm and do appear to have a purpose.

One meeting was exceptionally exciting when brought an old phonograph for some of us to listen to those old songs from yesteryear.

They are also planning a big work party at the church in mid September and are planning to supply and serve coffee after the church services for the month of October.

The next meeting is being held on Sept 28th and Jack sends out a special invitation to all who wish to attend to please come at 7:30 pm.

John Carswell



## REPORT TO THE HANDSHAKE

May the blessing of unity be with us during this time of struggle.

My first thoughts to be passed on is my gratitude for all those who toiled to make the Celebration of Faith 1988 a success. The weekend was again spiritually filling to all those who attended.

We have men who are hurting and this time of spiritual fulfillment will strengthen us.

Dr. Albert Baldeo soothed a lot of hurting in his three theme addresses - "Growing in Jesus". The weekend culminated with communion and tearful farewells and with promises to return in 1989.

On Sunday June 5th, I attended the annual AOTS rally at Shawnigan Lake on Vancouver Island. This event is hosted by Vancouver Island District Council. This is an annual picnic and outdoor service with families. There were games, sing-songs, skits, supper and there were trophies for horseshoes and club attendance, followed by an outdoor service.

In July I attended an organizational meeting with men at Aldergrove United Church and spoke on AOTS Mens clubs. Also in attendance were AOTS members from South Burnaby who are their support.

My thanks to Terry Taylor from St. Giles who has volunteered to be Lower Mainland District Council President and in the near future we will be recruiting 1st and 2nd Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. We will be looking forward to increasing mens clubs in the lower mainland.

We are also looking at changing the AOTS ROUNDUP from a one day event to a two day event. By doing this we hope to have THE ROUNDUP in places where ferry schedules will be less of a constraint on attendance. Billeting at this event will be discussed at our BC planning meeting Sept 9th in Sidney, Vancouver Island.

Again we would appreciate mens groups and clubs to forward snaps or slides of special events to THE HANDSHAKE EDITOR.

I shall be attending the National Council Executive meeting Sept 30, Oct 1, & 2 in Duncan, B.C. and will be submitting a request that BC host the 1993 National AOTS convention. This will be our 70th anniversary of the founding of AOTS at Ryerson church in Vancouver in 1923.

THE HANDSHAKE is our main communication tool, so please keep in mind it requires funding and material.

Believe in yourself that you, even you, can do some of the work that God would like done, and unless you do it, it will be left undone.

As one that serves,  
Roy K. Jones  
BC AOTS/UCM President



### NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETS IN DUNCAN.

The National Council of United Church AOTS Mens Clubs will be holding their annual meeting at Duncan, BC on Sept 30, Oct 1 & 2. It is expected that members of the council will be present from across Canada, to struggle with a heavy agenda.

We do also hope to be able

to spend some time looking at the Stewardship theme "Share the Journey."

We are pilgrims on a journey, a journey of faith. As individuals we take up the cross when we recognized Christ's love in our hearts, and follow in Christ's way.

A journey takes us from where we are "no longer", to where we are "not yet". The human journey takes us as a species, as civilizations and as nations on a path which is sometimes familiar, sometimes unknown; sometimes we push ahead, sometimes we stand still. The human journey each of us takes in life is no different.

To share the journey implies more than that we are not alone.

Our Christian faith affirms that God goes with us on our journey at all times and in all places.

We in AOTS are on a journey. We strive to be on the arm of the church reaching out in fellowship to all men. We could spend time studying Acts 2:14-17.

On our journey of faith, we have countless opportunities to serve, as individuals and as clubs. Share the journey; with one another; share the journey as a disciple of Christ. Share the journey.

Fred Holberton, Western Vice President, National AOTS.

I will live this day as if it were Christmas. I will be the giver of gifts and deliver to my enemies the gift of forgiveness; my opponents, tolerance; my friends, a smile; my children, a good example, and every gift will be wrapped with unconditional love.



## THE AOTS FINDS ANOTHER WAY TO SERVE

This summer the two point charge of Aldergrove - Mt. Lehman asked our AOTS Celebration of Faith at Langley for assistance with one of the Sunday services. John Carswell accepted with alacrity and rounded up 3 members of South Burnaby AOTS and two of the Aldergrove men. The team was complete.

9:30 Sunday morning Mt. Lehman Church. It looked like the kind of church we all carry in our mind as the "country church in the wildwood." The members made us welcome and Jack Shenton of Aldergrove knew everybody and that sure helped. Mt. Lehman used a hymn book new to us, but it was a good one. Scripture readings, responsive prayers, the old hymns and the new hymns we all love and enjoy.

Chris Jack conducted the service, Bill Anderson and Bob Bagshaw sang to Bob's guitar accompaniment, and the lessons were read by Jack Shenton. John Carswell told the children's story and Chris preached the sermon. Everything went like clockwork, it had to. We shook hands all round and then into the cards and Aldergrove here we come.

Aldergrove United Church

is a modern building with a lovely sanctuary. The Aldergrove members of our group ensured us a welcome where we were received not as strangers but as fellow Christians visiting with a message of hope, encouragement and challenge. The pattern was repeated but the Aldergrove congregation made it all new and those who came to serve received "a blessing" and the gracious "thank yous" of the folk added to our joy.

The summer is always a difficult time for congregations to find "pulpit supply" but AOTS groups can help. It is an opportunity to witness to our faith, to share with others what God has done for us - to participate in worship is a wonderful way of saying "thank you Lord."

Talk about it at your next meeting - name someone to act as organizer of such a group. The organizer should contact his minister and ask where they might help out in your district. In the spring, get down to the nuts and bolts; who does what and again your minister will be glad to help you get it all together.

Your AOTS have another way to serve.

Chris Jack

**COMING EVENTS**  
**BANFF CONFERENCE:** October 14, 15, 16, 1988. A very worthwhile event with good speakers. **RIGHT REV. J. BARRY CURTIS, ANGLICAN BISHOP OF CALGARY** is the theme speaker and will speak on "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME ..". Be sure you don't miss this time of fellowship and renewal of faith.

**COLLINGWOOD LUNCHEON:** Nov. 26, 1988, at 41st Ave and Joyce Road in Vancouver. 11:00 am to 2:30 pm. A real time of sharing and fellowship.

**AOTS SPRING ROUNDUP:** March 11 & 12, 1989, at Gordon United in Langford (Victoria). Come and bring a friend to hear **KEN BENNER** who will speak on "WALKING WITH CHRIST TODAY."

**CELEBRATION OF FAITH:** May 26, 27 & 28, 1989 at Trinity Western University, 760 Glover Road, Langley. Open to men of all denominations to share their faith. Come and worship with your Christian friends.

**AOTS NATIONAL CONVENTION:** July 7, 8 & 9, 1989. This very important meeting is being held at Mt. Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick. Men should make every effort to attend, with a minimum of two from each club.

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## VANCOUVER ISLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETS

On July 15th, the District Council met at Esquimalt United to receive reports from various clubs on Vancouver Island.

Vice President Gordon Taylor chaired the meeting and Roy Jones gave the devotional.

The treasurer's report showed \$410.35 with some clubs a little late in paying their dues.

Brechin United reported donations of \$400.00 to Brechin Leadership Fund, \$60.00 to the Dave Stringer Hall at Moorecroft and a \$10.00 per month donation to a refugee settling in Nanaimo. Fund raising activities were Plant Sale \$60.00 and Flea Market Table \$114.00. It is nice to see such activity.

Chemainus-Ladysmith report meetings (one a slide show and one on Alcoholics Anonymous) and activity in donations - \$100.00 to the CGIT and three young people have received \$70.00 to to camp. They have future plans for a garage sale and recycling of paper to raise money.

Duncan United. Have a large club with 45-50 members at dinner meetings. They report activities such as Spring Tea, Country Drive & Tea for Seniors, Garage Sales, Camp Pringle, Work Party, and Skills and Auction Sale. Donations included: \$250.00, Red Shield Appeal \$200.00, Church Worship Committee (Banner Material), \$2000.00 to the Board of Stewards for renovation of ministers office, \$200.00 for framing pictures of previous ministers. Coming events: Comedy theatre in November. Sale of 3000 Boxes of Nuts. Cater National meeting and

install a hot water tank in the church hall. It is good to see such fine activity.

Esquimalt - this club is doing a fine job of being charitable. They have made the following donations" \$280.00 2 boys to Camp Pringle, \$180.00 2 men to the Celebration of Faith. Sponsored the Junior Choir to their annual pizza party, \$250.00 to sponsor student to the Music Festival in Calgary, \$90.00 for a member to go the Celebration of Faith. \$75.00 for another youth to Camp Pringle. They had an exceptional ladies night with fine musical entertainment.

## CELEBRATION OF FAITH

The Celebration is always an inspiring time and all who go, exclaim how good it is. Our goal in 1989 is to increase our numbers to exceed 100 men and hope to do this by talking it up one on one. Special attention this year is to be given to the younger men (16-19 years) who can get in at a reduced rate of \$65.00 (or \$55.00 if fully paid by Jan 1, 1989). This year the cost will be reduced if you register early or bring a friend attending for the first time.

The cost structure is: \$85.00 full cost including a \$20.00 non-refundable fee. If you register and pay in full prior to January 1, 1989 your total cost will be \$75.00. If you introduce (bring) someone attending the Celebration for the first time and pay anytime prior to May 26, 1989 the cost will be \$75.00 for each of you, for a saving of \$20.00 for the two of you.

For further information contact Frank MacLean (534-9454), Bill Pike (534-7128), Roy Jones (384-4640), Ken Martin (433-7171) or John Carswell

## AOTS PROVINCIAL PLANNERS

The BC AOTS President Roy Jones together with Vice President Ken Martin and Secretary Charlie Shave called a planning meeting at Sidney, B.C.'s Smitty's Restaurant meeting room on Sept 9th. In attendance were a total of 20 men representing some 14 churches.

Roy and Charlie did the devotional based on John 6:1-13.

Each person was asked to suggest names of speakers who could be asked to participate as a theme speaker or a workshop speaker for the activities planned later in the year.

The men then discussed long term goals: increased visitation and fellowship as well as a followup on THE HANDSHAKE. Attention was given to the Collingwood Luncheon in Vancouver on Nov. 26th, the Banff Mens' Conference, the Spring Roundup (which will be an overnight function with men and wives billeted), Camp Pringle Rally on June 11, and the Celebration of Faith May 26, 27 & 28 at Langley.

Because we are created in the image of God,  
Because we are soul as well as body,  
Because we have a hunger that no material things can satisfy,  
Because our souls are restless until they find peace with God.  
We have come to this sacred place to open our souls to the Spirit of the Living God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul;  
and all that is within me,  
bless His holy name!  
Bless the Lord, O my Soul,  
and forget not all his benefits.

Psalm 103:1-2



THE THOMAS CROSBY V NEEDS ASSISTANCE (PART ONE)

This year as our missionary ship is sailing up the West Coast, going into many little out of the way places and serving a great number of people. Some of these people have very little contact with the outside world except by way of the Thomas Crosby V. This missionary service is in need of some books and clothing, so if you are able to help fill this worthy need, please do.

They are not asking for the shirt off your back but they would like the extra one in your closet which you never wear anymore but still has wear in it. Likewise there are recent novels, pocketbooks, and children's books which you enjoyed reading but are still on the den's shelves. (We know THE HANDSHAKE is being dropped off at one point and on the next trip is being picked up and being taken onto the next point, and so on.

For further details please contact your minister for details of what is needed.

From Vancouver, Riv-Tow Straits Ltd. will take shipments addressed to the Thomas Crosby V at Prince Rupert for no charge. You must have the shipments securely packed and tied, and you must deliver the shipments to their Tilbury Island Terminal in Delta. From other locations, check with your local truck line, once they know the purpose they may also take your shipment at no charge to either Prince Rupert or Vancouver.

THE THOMAS CROSBY V NEEDS ASSISTANCE (PART TWO)

It takes a lot of money to run a ship the size of the Thomas Crosby V. This

winter, you will be hearing of a Conference wide campaign to build up an endowment fund that will generate enough interest income that the Central Marine Mission Field, including the Thomas Crosby V and other related coastal ministries could become self sustaining, releasing Home Missions funds for other areas of B.C.

Please listen carefully to the information given to your congregation. Donations will be income tax deductible and your donation will continue to work on your behalf for many years to come.

REBUILDING OF DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Lower Mainland District Council is in process of rebuilding and all clubs in the area are expected to become involved. They hope to involve many past presidents and to act upon their advice. Terry Taylor (St. Giles, Vancouver) has agreed to let his name stand for President for the first year at least. Thanks for the enthusiasm, Terry!

Deadline for submissions for next issue: December 16, 1988

Send to THE HANDSHAKE, c/o John Carswell 4134 Maywood Ave., Apt. 707, Burnaby, B.C., V5H 4C9

Advertising pays for THE HANDSHAKE, so please bear this in mind as you read our advertising policy and rates.

Advertising is solicited to assist us in covering the costs of production. By accepting advertising we can produce a paper at no cost to the men of the church.

Our advertising costs are \$90.00 for four issues for business card size. All material must be camera ready and in one colour.

Advertising copy can be sent to THE HANDSHAKE at the address shown on the last page of this issue.

We reserve the right to refuse advertising if of an objectionable nature.

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## ALBERTA SPRING ROUNDUP

On March 19 & 20, the Alberta Spring Roundup was held in Innisfail with about 48 men in attendance. It was a very uplifting rally, with Rev. Larry Edwards from Regina as theme speaker. His theme topic was "Each One Reach One". He spoke to us in a language we could understand and apply to our daily lives.

Fred Arnot played the piano and Max Vanden Brink led the singing - what a way to praise our God! Wally Scholts, the Alberta District Council President, co-chaired the meetings with Max and it went quite well. The overnight format proved exceptional with the meeting starting on Saturday at 1 pm and going to 5 pm. Then we are a delicious banquet (Alberta beef), resuming the meeting from 7 - 9 pm. The following morning, the roundup started and 9 and finished in time for the church service. After church, each one departed for the respective homes.

Some came considerable distances: Ernie Stafford, National Pres. - Duncan, BC; John Carswell - Vancouver, BC; Ray & Beth Selzer - Regina, SK; Jim & Mrs. Dickie - Edmonton, AB; Fred Holberton - Calgary, AB; Walter Baker - Saskatoon, SK; Fred Arnot - Penticton, BC; Jack Shaw - Milk River, AB; Ed Jackson - Isston, SK; Lyle Culham - Kindersley, SK; Dan Bickwith - Edmonton, AB; as well as many others.

This Roundup is going to be an annual event and it appears to be off to a good start. Congratulations to Fred, Wally and Max.

John Carswell, Chairman of Leadership Development, National AOTS

## DUNCAN AOTS DINNER MEETING

Some of the highlights of the Duncan AOTS June meeting. Plans re the Banff Conference. Work sheets were passed out for the upcoming Fun Fair. Christmas Nut Drive well under control as reported by committee chairman Fred Brown. \$2000.00 was voted to the church executive to held repay a building loan.

Another successful Garage Sale brought in about \$3000.00 in total. Report on Celebration of Faith by Keith MacDonald and Alf Lloyd - take time to get to know a little bit about yourself and others. These words were appropriate to blend in with the guest speaker of the evening whose message was to share oneself through God with some persons who have temporarily lost contact with the real world.

Coming to our local hospital, Marilyn Klizs is pastoral co-ordinator doing religious educational work. Marilyn is well qualified for this, having completed a three year ecumenical course and one year in theology. Marilyn went on to weay that volunteers are needed, and training sessions are available for volunteers to share in these physical and spiritual needs of persons who fell alone in hospitals or in the lonesome world that waits outside.

Fellowship In Service Unit of the UCW catered to the 50 AOTS members present, serving scalloped potatoes, ham, and vegetables, followed by the ever present 5 kinds of pie

Al Tremble, Public Relations

## DUNCAN AOTS FUN FAIR JUNE 30, 1988

Cloudy weather failed to dampen the enthusiasm of some 200 participants for a good time evening at the lovely outdoor expanse which is the home of Stan and Mary Owen.

Settled in a valley between two mountain ranges it was a lovely setting for a totally outdoor event barbecue style supper prepared on the spot by AOTS members - with a lot of outside help.

The "hayride" was a great attraction as was the "sponge throw". "Beat the buzzer" was a new attraction, and the "stake your claim" event had a new twist. Horseshoes and bottle throw rounded out the games.

All tickets were 10 cent a games, complete dinner w. \$2.50, the UCW served pies deluxe or a la mode along with coffee or juice at a nominal cost. This was not intended to be a money making event - nevertheless we will had a small profit.

Al Tremble, Public Relations

Live it up, we say, and by this we usually mean breaking up one of the commandments of God. But what is the end of this? How alive do we feel? How vital? How full of purpose? How strong? Are God's commandments fetters to be broken, or chains to anchor us firmly to His strength? If I am steadied by God's commandments, I am free to be useful, to be creative, to live!



## AOTS NEWS ITEM 1988

"The Adult Committee of Division of Mission in Canada has decided to cut AOTS adrift."

We learned of the above while seaching for those B.C. men who have served as Provincial Vice Presidents. Our source up to the year 1971 is taken from an unpublished history of AOTS written by the late Dr. Harry Grant. The rest is taken from living memory and we welcome any corrections.

Alongside the names we sought was a message, a record if you will, of our relationship, or lack thereof, with the National Church. The two stories found therein are told in the light of the present day struggle that rages throughout our Church. We find one minority group within our membership crying for social justice based on what seems to be "Sexual Preferences" while an ever smaller minority begs for admission into the same church on a record of "Service."

## NEWS ITEM 1923 AOTS IS BORN

Yes! AOTS is eligible for the old age pension and this birthday have slipped by unnoticed. Ironically this is the year the Church wishes to put us out to pasture. This is a tragedy that can not be allowed to happen. Is this the just reward for the men who we are honouring here today plus the entire AOTS membership, past and present. We who have served Christ, and through Him, the United Church of Canada while never being allowed to feel that we "AOTS" are family? We who only wish to "Serve" in accordance with

Christ's teachings. Are we to be turned out? Cast adrift? Why are we unwanted? Unloved? Are we disidents in the eyes of the present power structure?

## NEWS ITEM 1925 - THE UNITED CHURCH IS BORN

Our movement, as young as it was, sat down with the very first Moderator and offered itself as a role model, with which, as it had done in B.C., to harness the amazing potential of the laymen within the church. Further the record shows that we conversed with Moderator after Moderator to no avail, even though our growing record of service in His name was there for all to see.

## NEWS ITEM 1954 - BC CONFERENCE WELCOMES AOTS

We were on the Church's rolls albeit only at the Conference level. Even while we banged on the door asking to be let in, our record of service grew and grew. If financial aid to the church is a measuring stick, ours had to read FULL. Collectively we have raised thousands; nay millions, for Christian related projects! Oftimes our efforts of nationwide Christian Community Services, would bring forth the wierdest reations. We were accused of taking energy and money out of the local parish. Things like membership dues to keep the national organization going were often frowned upon. From time to time we were accused of not being religious enough while all the while our members were teaching Sunday Scholol, leading youth groups, serving on the Session, etc., etc., etc. Because we

ascribed to being a service club we were sometimes branded as Rah Rah Bous who were self promoters. Our critics refused to see that were a service club with a "difference" in that we are Christ centred. Year after year we turned the other cheek, remained loyal to the Lord and our Church. Year after year, we were kept outside.

## NEWS ITEM 1954 SECULAR RECOGNITION

We asked for and received recognition through certification under the B.C. Societies Act. First as Vancouver and District Council and then as the National Association of AOTS clubs. Project after project were first proven successfull by AOTS and then copied by other service clubs.

By this time several revisions had been made ot our Constitution first drafted in the 1920's. In 1954 the latest version created the position of Provincial Vice President. Here the records show H. Mitchell of Kelowna as the first appointee. Gordon Mercer was next and he was the first to represent us at the National Executive meetings. As the years passed this office alternated, and still does, between Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, with the latter person assuming the dual hats of AOTS and UCM president. In this round about manner we had offical representation at BC Conference.

## NEWS ITEM 1956 GROWTH

In the iterim we had grown from 35 BC clubs, with a few continued



outside the province, in 1935. By 1956 we were 75 clubs nationwide. National Executive meetings were held annually with Dr. Harry Grant as our Provincial President. 1952 saw our first biennial National Convention in Calgary. No. 25 was held in Regina in 1987.

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NEWS ITEM 1957  
AOTS PEAKS  
AOTS A COMMITTEE?

AOTS exploded into Ontario, Quebec and had a foothold in the Maritimes. "Watch our smoke now" was what we said. The number of clubs were over the three hundred mark and increasing. Suddenly a grand plan was put into motion by the Board of Men which was to see Men organized from the pastoral charge up. Everyman in the Church was designated a United Church Man. AOTS was to be the foundation! Recognition was ours! We were to be family at last!

Our leadership became the leadership of the new movement. We even served on the Board of Men. There were five full time Secretaries. How could we fail with such support!?!

But alas! It did fail.

On paper it was euphoric, in its application it was a paper tiger. Sure we (AOTS) made it into the UC Manual, but as a committee of the UCM. Our presidents became chairmen. They were to be appointed, if you please. Our name was even changed to UCAOTSMC. At any rate when the Boards were replaced by the Divisions, Men fell somewhere within the vast Division of Mission In Canada and never did find a home there. We did not fit the pattern.

AOTS itself hung in there

with grim determination. Our ranks were confused and like the rest of the church, our membership was down. Our name was stricken from the Manual and there followed about ten years of asking? begging? to be let in as family. Somewhere within the machinations of church government we lost our official ties - if we ever had any. The Division promised financial support. All things aside, we were told that we could always come home. AOTS men sat on the Adult Committee but as appointed members not by right. We exercised our democratic rights and voted as we saw best. For this we have been asked to step down? We should demand an answer to this and we should take it to the highest court in the Church so that justice may be served.

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NEWS ITEM 1988 RIGHT BACK  
WHERE WE STARTED FROM

Some will say that this is a cry for "THE GOOD OLD DAYS" but this not true. History has shown and we continue to show that we are a group of men willing to serve in His name. Our only failure is with the National Church. They refuse to let us in. Perhaps this is so because we don't fit a structural diagram featuring decentralization? Perhaps it is because we do not condone social changes which are not according to the teachings of Christ?

Let us pray that our leadership will not pick up the game ball and leave the park. We are here to stay and we will be part of the United Church of Canada.

Given a vote, I am sure that our past Vice Presidents would say "hang in there, fellows". Their

combined service covers 44 years. We have named the 3 pioneers: Mitchell, Mercer and Grant. Those who followed were: Charles Burritt, Ed Hess, Bill Hastings, Reg Attwell, Harry Colnett, Don Morton, Norm Carter, Frank MacLean, Tom Murray, Ernie Stafford, Bill Cumming, Roy Jones and Ken Martin

Bill Hastings  
National Archivist

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CELEBRATION OF FAITH 1988  
HUGE SUCCESS

The Celebration of Faith in May 1988 was indeed a spiritually filled weekend with Rev. Albert Baldeo from Kelowna the theme speaker. His message was soul searching and refreshing to all. The numbers were down due to the National Convention in Regina and some felt it was due to the United Church report on Sexual Orientation, Lifestyles and Ministry.

However the report from the planning committee is favourable and plans are already in the works for the 1989 Celebration. The dates for this function are May 26, 27 & 28, 1989. Be sure to plan to attend this inspiring meeting.

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