

The



Handshake

As One That Serves

Issue No..20

Fall Edition

Sept 1991

Presenting Lloyd Richards Our New President

For the next two years President Lloyd's photo and report will be featured on this page. Traditionally he will report on the well being and concerns of men as he sees them. For this issue the Handshake wants to introduce Lloyd the man, the leader, the family man. So first we bring you a mini biography and then Lloyd our President. In the later case we reveal his dreams, his aspirations, his plans to breathe new life into the association and through it enfold all Christian men both inside and outside of the United Church of Canada. The Handshake has taken his inaugural address and transformed it into an interview reported via a question and answer format.

Mini-Biography

Lloyd took an early retirement from the Federated CO-OP of Canada a few years ago and now intends to centre his church work around men's work. His life time devotion to his church and the offices he has occupied would fill this page. When the Handshake interviewed him and his lovely wife Eileen, starting with the question, "Were you childhood sweethearts"? the answer was "No". It turned out that Lloyd grew up in Blenheim and Arlene in Chatham Ont. and they met at a Presbytery Young Peoples gathering. From this point on they not only shared their life together in marriage but also their Christian Faith. Thirty-eight years of marriage has been blessed with 4 children, in a boy girl, boy girl, sequence and six grandchildren. The photo was taken at the Convention which tells us that they share their commitment.

Where do we go from Here?

Handshake: Given the fact that our ranks have decreased is it possible to bring back lost members and to gain new ones?

Lloyd: *Certainly! but we must change our Image, our Format. What worked yesterday does not always work to-day.*

Handshake: Who are we really?

Lloyd: *Of course we are the men of the United Church but that is not all. Our organization represents all men. We are Brothers in Christ whether we be Baptists, Catholics, whatever We are one in the Lord.*

Handshake: Are the men who are out there lonely?



Lloyd and Eileen Richards

Lloyd: *Yes this is so. Many men want to be included. They want to be a part even in the most insignificant way. Sometimes it might be a little awkward to come back but lets jump that hurdle and carry on.*

Handshake: Where does God fit into the picture?

Lloyd: *Everywhere and all of the time! We must be more conscious of God! We must include God in our daily work! In our times of play! There must be more prayer and thanksgiving! All must entertain a positive approach to life and the world!*

Handshake: Tell us Lloyd where do you see the United Church Men going and what do you envision happening in say the next ten years?

Lloyd: *I can see greater numbers joining together, worshipping God and loving one another. There will be an increased number of retreats with dialogue, some younger men will lead parts of the organization. There will come a realization that God is with us, loves us, and wants to help us to perform.*

The past will diminish and the future will welcome us to join together as we share the home of the Lord Jesus Christ one with another. We must truly be "As One That Serves". Serving the needy, the less fortunate, share that which we have, especially the love and joy of being an ambassador of God.

Sure there will be a time of disagreement but we can't let the bickering curtail us from serving the Lord and sharing God's love. Yes it will be hard work but it will be a joy doing it. As we serve one another, we serve God and I see this happening. The format may change, yes, may have to change to stay alive. We will accept that, try new ideas, do all of these things with the Love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It includes all men, yes even you and me. Let us now care for one another, share with each other, as we do the work as the disciples of our Lord and Saviour.

Handshake: Thank you Lloyd and may God Bless and help you to gather all men As Ones That Serve.

The Handshake

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This publication is financed primarily by the National association but also by donations from individuals, companies and non affiliated clubs and groups.

Our purpose is to share the inspiration of Service in His name with all Christian Men regardless of where and why they gather.

Donations

Greetings Brothers from the First Life Member-84 June 30th-Health does not allow for active involvements - \$ 12..00 cheque to renew Handshake for 1991.

Vaya Con Dios

(Go with God)

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Bibles n' Prayers

By

Bill Hastings



The Handshake thanks the Image* for the following Bible N' Prayers story. This group meets not only in study and prayer but as a motivating group within the Church Community. We quote in part and paraphrase the rest.

No TV, no telephone, no outside distractions-- sound tempting? Thirty one adults, five teens and 31 under 12's from Squamish United thought so, when they gathered at Camp Fircom. April 26-28. "Plans for a retreat grew out of a men's breakfast meeting, reported Maureen Gilmour. "How well do you know the person sitting next to you on Sunday Morning." they asked. The idea for a congregational camp retreat was born.

There was a real feeling of communication and love for one another. Beach combers, soaking up the sun, trail exploring, fishing, kite flying, frisbee throwing, and a not so successful Volley Ball game using a soccer ball. The Theme for the Sunday morning service was, *Peace. "In our lives, in our homes in our church, in our community, in our world."* Five groups formed earlier, participated, with singing, Scripture reading and a skit.

Historically AOTS has a deep interest in Camp Fircom. This editor attended one of the summer camps as a boy of 12. This was in the glory days of Dr. Andrew Roden the initiator of B.C.s first Church service broadcast. He also founded the camp and initiated the social service aspect of First United.

The running of Fircom was the direct responsibility of First United and many AOTS men sat on its board of directors. It was through this association that it was learned that the camp was condemned both on a physical and sanitary basis. This problem was brought to the Vancouver District AOTS Council in the 1970's. The member clubs rallied to the cause and put in a new septic tank system, new power poles, new wiring and generally upgraded the entire camp. The National Church and AOTS shared the

costs. AOTS supplied the manpower with weekend work parties allowing for a new licence to operate.

* The Image is an insert in the B.C. copies of the Observer. As its header states "From the Rockies to the Pacific", The Image. "Reflects the B.C. Church Scene. Rumor has it going out of business and mores the pity for it is a marvelous from of inter-church communication.

A

Successful Club VII

by

John Carswell



Helping your club be successful

Each church club and group of men have different needs. Some needs are not very large whereas others are stressful and important. When your group meets with the other leaders of your church and discusses this problem, get all the facts. Really, what are the needs? When your group realizes the needs of the congregation take the facts to your planning committees. When they have studied the problem and needs they can make recommendations to the club for final assessment and follow through.

There are many ways you can perform service and improve the atmosphere and attitude of all. You should not look to your minister to be the "fix all" leader. Help them in making decisions and performing a greater service to all of the people. Your help is needed! Make that start to-day.



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Harry Colnett Fund

The Man

The Handshake was pleased to receive from our past Honourary President, Sid Bagnall, an article covering the man after whom this fund was named. The reference here is taken from the "Observer" dated January, 1974. It extols Harry's acumen as leader in Men's work and in particular his rejuvenation of the Fairfield United AOTS of Victoria, B.C. He took it from near obscurity to an active club with 56 members. Of course they won the Dave Sherwood Trophy for that year. Harry brought to the Church and AOTS his life time experience as a Union organizer. Working across the country he organized the Brotherhood of Painters and Allied Trades for twenty years. The membership grew from a few hundred to 10,000 during his tenure. He was a leader in all levels of Men's work. Before and at the National Convention in Kingston, where Rex Dolan spoke on the theme "A New Image for AOTS". Harry and a group of Ontario AOTS men, proposed a complete change in the status quo if not the image. When the dust settled everyone fell into their respective places and found that they could work very nicely together under the existing set up. The elections saw Harry sitting on the National Council. He was feisty but effective, perhaps using his union bargaining methods to gain a point but something always shone through. He was a true servant of Jesus Christ.

The Fund

During the course of National business there was much discussion arising from the report of Murray MacPherson, who chairs the committee which services this fund. The diagnosis was that the fund was alive and well. The prognosis was that its pre-

sent state of health was in jeopardy due to lack of exercise. Started in Winnipeg at the 1971 Convention it has grown through many donations to the point that it can support in perpetuity while granting two \$1000.00 scholarships per year. For some unknown reason there have not been any applicants over the last two years.

The scholarships are directed to students of agriculture, fisheries, and or the food sciences who are interested in serving on the international scene. A sentence lifted from a letter that is distributed each year to Universities with these faculties describes the situation as follows:

"These awards (known as the Harry Colnett Scholarships) are designed to encourage students to prepare for service in international agriculture and education, particularly in projects related to the production and distribution of food in developing countries"

Application forms accompany this letter. The deadline this year is October 15, 1991.

If there are no applications again this year the National Association will suggest that the terms of reference be expanded to include other deserving students.

Hospital Fund \$58,900 Keep Up The Good Work Guys!

Yes the total has reached \$58,900.00. It was approved at the Convention to top off the \$8000.00 for this biennium with \$ 2000.00. The news gets better. It was moved and seconded and approved unanimously at the bussiness session to continue with this project for the next two years.

Your donations over this project's last time frame, under the direction of Dr. Peter Newberry, have been used for continuing education. Certain auxillary persons have attended courses to upgrade their hospital skills. We have asked Dr. Peter to supply us with the names of individuals that have been helped in this way.

Early on in this project we supplied funds that were directed towards a life saving piece of equipment at the

Bay Verte Hospital in Newfoundland*. During the very first week that this machine was on the job, an AOTS member witnessed a hurried rush over rough terrain where it was used to save the victims life. Although we can not take credited for all the finances needed here our help was appreciated.



Convention Resolutions Bob Brewster Chairman

1. Be it resolved: That this 17th National Biennial Convention of the National AOTS extend a sincere vote of gratitude to the University of Windsor for their hospitality. Carried.
2. Be it resolved that this 17th Biennial Convention of AOTS request its executive to work towards the union of all AOTS Clubs, and all United Church Men all men's clubs within the United Church. Carried.
3. Be it resolved: that this 17th Biennial Convention of the National AOTS direct the constitutional Committee to add an additional subsection 13 of the National AOTS By-Laws, which would read, "Persons in paid staff positions of National AOTS are ineligible to hold elected positions on the National AOTS Council." Carried.
4. Be it resolved: That the AOTS National Council strike a committee to examine the role of the laity in the United Church of Canada and to make recommendations to AOTS members at the 18th Biennial Convention regarding this matter. Carried.
Committee members: Gordon Hall, Bill Pike

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Convention Scenes and Comments



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Sing
Along
with
Betty
and
Craig
Watson



And Singing Along are the Distons(left) and the Cashores(right)

Congratulations

To Convention Chairman Herb Parker(left) and his committee members who made the Convention run like clock work. We knew, by your concerned insider faces, that there were a few minor problems. But, Hey! believe us guys and gals it was "*top drawer*".

And congratulations to Bob Duthie(right). Great message, dynamic delivery, and Bob, you proved you can do two things at once. Bob made an entry on a bicycle talking all the while. Shucks no camera at the ready.



More Scenes and Comments

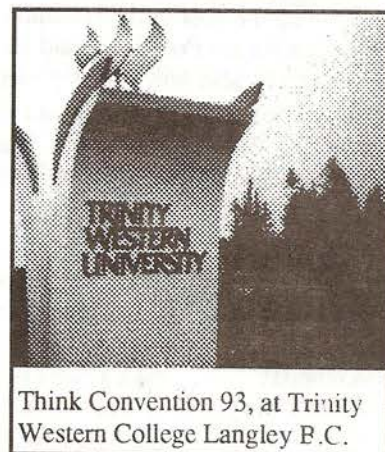
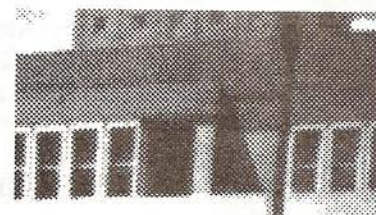
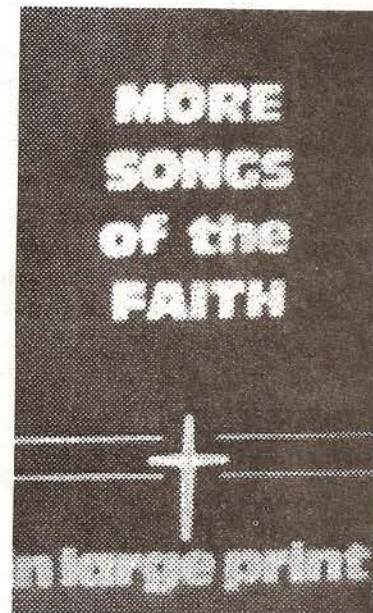


Every session started off with Craig Watson above, leading a Sing Song. Herb Parker (in the background) stood ready with announcements introductions .etc. The Song book pictured right was one of two that were used. A United Church publication that was well received. Available at your nearest Resource Centre.



The caption for the above could well read the "Pro and the Rooky". On the left is Phil Spence who has attended 18 of the 19 Conventions, starting with No.1. This is Bill Pike's, of Langley B.C., first.

The scene on the right depicts "departure". Bill Hastings on the right leaves with memories of friendships renewed as well as new ones made.. Both he and Bill Pike(left) took with them that wonderful spirit of well being that is part and parcel of every Christian gathering. The 19th AOTS Convention is over, the spirit lingers on as a religious experience.



Think Convention 93, at Trinity Western College Langley B.C.



Bay of Quinte



Craig Watson commented briefly on some of the events during his two year term of office, emphasizing the need to move AOTS into a *"dynamic and vigorous future"*. He also said there is a need to eliminate *"a terrible void*

between the National level and the ordinary members of local clubs", expressing the hope that *"communication can be improved with help from a new executive"*. Noting that his successor is to be Ronald Welsh he expresses confidence that *"you will give him the same support I have received"*

British Columbia



Bill Pike reporting for Jack Shenton, commented on several matters: Preparation for the 1991 Banff Men's Conference which is to be hosted by B.C. The 1991 Round Up held in Duncan and attended by the National President Bob

Lewis and Western Vice President Fred Holberton. The Celebration of faith held in May at Trinity Western University, Langley, B.C., where the 18th Biennial Convention is to be held in August of 1993.

Hamilton



Howard Wills reported on his efforts to promote AOTS within the Conference, there being but three clubs at this time: at St. James-Rosemount U.C. in Kitchener, First U.C. in Cambridge, and St. Paul's U.C. in Oakville. The response however has been poor, indicating that "this is not

very fertile territory" for the creation of more AOTS clubs. The idea of becoming a part of a national organization just does not appeal". Even with the present clubs there are some problems: the inability of St. James Rosemount, to find a person willing to serve as a President, requiring Ed Edwards to remain in this office for six years. The members of the club at First U.C. seemingly have no interest in any activities beyond the local level. However on a more positive note, he reported that he is now a voting member of the Hamilton Conference Executive (as AOTS Conference President), and Gordon Hall (of St. James Rosemount) is also now a voting member of this body. AOTS is also entitled to have representatives on the Administration, Finance and Capital Funds, and Staff Committees and he is seeking members willing to serve on them..

Montreal Ottawa Reports John Poley

John Poley reported, again, very little change in his area, "very little if any" over the last five years. He reported six men's clubs in the Ottawa area, only one of which is AOTS. (at Rothwell U.C.) and *"they still function in isolation"*.

London



Keith Arner reported on his efforts to promote AOTS at a number of events: at five Presbytery events where he was invited to speak on AOTS. Again at the 1990 and 1991 Annual Conference meetings he spoke on AOTS. He also had contacts with ten churches which have asked for information on AOTS programs. As a result of such events he remains optimistic for the future of this AOTS organization.

Manitou

Jack Thompson reported on some of the activities of several clubs in this Conference. He also indicated that there are plans to form a new club *"in the area of New Liskeard St Pauls' U.C.) and Kirkland Lake (Trinity U.C.)"*. Expecting to be advised of the date and the location meeting this summer.



Toronto



Bob Brewster commenting that Toronto Conference and the Church *"have been ignoring Men's work since the demise of the Board of Men"*, Brewster indicates that the situation has been improving over the last two years and that he is *"well pleased"* with the progress of

AOTS during this period. However, he says, there is still much to be done if AOTS is to receive the recognition it should have in the courts of the Church.

Saskatchewan

Noting that this will be his final report as Conference Representative, Eldon Jensen commented on several matters: the AOTS clubs of Lakeview U.C. and Zion U.C. (both of Regina) now active again and meeting regularly, the former hosting a highly successful Spring Rally in April which was attended by 85 men. Reported his commitment to Regina Central Lions Club plus his role as a musician in a group known as the "Old Tyme Fiddlers". He expressed regret over his inability to attend the 1991 Convention but expects to be at Langley B.C. in 93. He reports that Ross Evans of the Wesley AOTS club in Regina is to succeed him as Conference Representative.

Maurice Wright our Recording Secretary prepared the above. He has also prepared a document questioning the fact that less than 1% of our church membership can exercise their franchise at Council Level. This well researched presentation is available by writing to:

Maurice Wright
1454 Willowdown Road
Oakville, Ont.
L6L1X3



Reports

Full and positive reports from every region and Committee. These reports will be going out to all Club Presidents. Copies on request for others Write to

AOTS Executive Secretary.
Ken Lane
1100-1305 Ontario St.
Burlington, Ont.
L7S 1Y1



Meet Al Diston*
Honourary President

*One of the founders of AOTS in Saskatchewan. Ten years on the National Council as Vice President of the Saskatchewan Conference of AOTS Men.

Elections

A healthy sign to see multiple candidates for various offices. Not one office was accepted on a temporary or fill in basis. The Handshake hears they are all enthusiastic and raring to go. Look for big things to happen over the next Biennium.



Meet your new Treasurer Ernie Orpin*

*Hails from Wiinipeg. Long time AOTS supporter there. Has served as National Finance Chairman. and other Committees

Devotions

Club Presidents, Individuals Watch for Wally Shoult's report. Contains excellent reference bibliography for devotions. Pushes Prayer Study Groups- Bible Study and like groups.

The National AOTS Council 1991-1993

- Honorary President-- Al Diston
- Past President---Bob Lewis
- President---Lloyd Richards
- President Elect---John Carswell
- Eastern Vice President-Robert Heany
- Central Vice President-Craig Watson
- Western Vice President-Wally Shoult's
- Recording Secretary-Maurice Wright
- National Treasurer--Ernie Orpin
- Executive Director--Ken Lane
- Member-at-Large (DMC)---Bill Bremner

Conference Reps

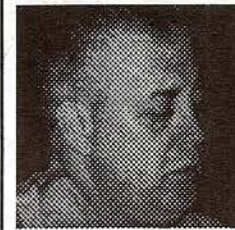
- NFLD. Labrador--Raymond Gray
- Maritime---Wilson Jones
- Bay Of Quinte--Ron Welsh
- Toronto--Bob Brewster
- Hamilton--Howard Wills
- London --Keith Arner
- Manitou---John Thompson
- Manitoba & N.W.Ont-Jacek Romanowski
- Saskatchewan---Ross Evans
- Alberta & North West-Max Vandenbrink
- British Columbia---Jack Shenton

Chairman of National AOTS Standing Committees

- Church and Community Service-Al Smith
- Constitution---Bob Lewis
- Convention ----Reg Cooper
- Fellowship-Membership-Keith MacFayden
- Finance--Ed Edwards
- Nominating---Garry Wilson
- Spiritual Life & Leadership---Gil Reashore
- Members at Large**
- Lorne Harding
- Bill Hastings
- Bill Pike
- Layton Stewart

Chairmen of Special Committees

- Staff Committee--Keith Arner
- Editorial Committee -John Carswell



Meet Your New Spiritual Life Life Man Gil Reashore*

*Hails from SouthPorcupine Ont. Long time AOTS worker. Chairman 1991 Ontario AOTS Round-Up. Look for some power house devotinals.

Dave Sherwood Trophy*

*Presented to the Club with the greatest membership percentage increase over the AOTS biennium.

- First: St. Pauls Sterling Ont---66%
- Second: Regina Wesley-----57%
- Third: Sarnia Grace -----50%
- Honourable Mention:
- Park St. Chatham Ont.-----32%

Eastern Vice President* Robert Heaney

*Bob hails from Kennsington P.E.I We have no photograph because he was unable to attend the Annual Meeting. The notorious "Irish Blight" had struck his potatoe farm. Our prayers go out to him and all the other brothers so plagued

Theme Speaker A Challenge to Commitment by Bob Duthie

A dynamic challenge by this dynamic, bicycle riding, speaker. Reprints are available.

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Threat to Unity Part II* Rev. Ray Sadler

And so, the church of Rome

was becoming divided among these two distinct lines of thinking. One might call it, the legalists v.s. the liberated" And the hard line that separated the two threatened to blast the church apart.

Now all of this may have a familiar ring to it. For have we not in the United Church of Canada suffered these past two years from the considerable division and disruption and disunity not over the matter of clean v.s. unclean foods - not over the observance of the sabbath - **BUT OVER THE ISSUE OF HOW WE CHRISTIANS INTERPRET HUMAN SEXUALITY.** .. and more specifically over the issue of whether or not we should ordain to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, homosexual and lesbian persons. And it is likely that this weeks decision by the General Council will do little to lessen this tension.

It is sad that in the courses of the debate over the past two years, many good church people have felt disenfranchised by a system which they believe has failed them... others have come away disillusioned and hurt.. some have felt real anger. congregations have broken away.. in some cases church givings have dwindled dramatically. All of this has happened within a fellowship which is supposed to be built upon a spirit of love and caring, of long suffering and patient understanding ! It has been a time of real anguish for many of us.

Now what did general council say about this matter in its deliberations this week? In a nutshell, it reaffirmed the 1988 statement on Membership, which for the most part, I believe,, is a fair and sensible document. It also made some strong statements affirming marriage and family life. But it is what General council didn't say that troubles many of us, and certainly the tone has been such that the

door has opened to a full recognition of homosexual and lesbian lifestyle. as normal, and it seems that we are moving towards ordaining those who practice this life style. Indeed it is assumed by most of us in the church, that such ordinations are almost bound to take place over the next couple of years.

In the light of the most recent pronouncements by General Council and what seems likely to be a continuing debate, I think I should state where I stand on the sexuality issue.

I still believe in the ideals of faithfulness in marriage and chasteness in singleness. I am against lowering the ideals so that as Christians we may more readily fit into the trends of secular society.

I still believe in the vital role of the Christian Family

I believe that God's intension in sex is far greater than simple human gratification, and that the pleasures that men and women find in sex comes as one of God's great gifts. to be cherished in an atmosphere of mutual responsibility, caring and trust..

I believe in equality of all god's precious children, and in the special responsibility we Christians have in liberating men and women from any kind of tyrant that inhibits their development as human beings.

However, at this stage in my journey I cannot accept that that homosexual or lesbian behavior is normal or right, and therefore I cannot accept the idea of ordination for declared practising homosexual persons. I have not found sufficient evidence, either from secular science or from my study of scripture, to persuade me otherwise. Moreover, I do not think the distinction between what is "natural" and what is "learned" in some forms of sexual behavior has yet been made sufficiently clear.

Having said that. I believe that the positive results of the current debate is in making us realize that the church has never truly ministered to homosexual persons over the years. Now hopefully, such

persons will feel free to express themselves and to make known their needs, and the church is challenged to at last minister to them in creative ways.

I would not want to be part of a church which failed to reach out to all people in love and compassion and openness and understanding. However while I would want to accept the person I can not condone the life style, and I continue to believe with all my heart that whatever the encumbrance to the full development of the human personality, whatever that may be, I believe that the holy spirit can enter into a life, and heal and send a person in a completely different direction. I believe that healing can take place with homosexual persons, even as it can with you and with me., whatever the issue on our particular life my be.

Who knows in God's good time, who will be proven right and who will be shown to be wrong on this particular issue. There is no doubt but what there will be agonizing times ahead for some of us who are not in sympathy with the present stance of the United Church. And I would dare to suggest it will be an agonizing time for most denominations over the next ten years, for although the United Church was the first to bring sexuality out into the open for discussion, this debate is coming fast for all denominations. No church will be able to avoid it.

*In part I Ray described a Christian environment best described by the following beautiful lines of the hymn:

*"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian Love
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."*

In part 2 he examines the division of the church in the light of his beliefs and their applications to this problem.



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Down Through The Years

Back in 1932, when AOTS was confined to the borders of British Columbia a vehicle of communication was developed called the "The Handshake". When the movement went National under the presidency of Charlie Atchinson the Handshake became the national news letter. It was replaced by the "President's Newsletter" put out by National during the presidencies of Brydon McCrea and Dave Sherwood. This covered the first eleven years of National's existence. From 1959 to 1972 "The Bridge Builder" under the auspices of the Board of Men and edited by Jack Banks covered AOTS, UCM, and others activities of the sponsoring body. With the Board of Men's demise the National Association revived its News Letter which was ably edited by Al Smith, Ken. Turner and Maurice Wright. Two editions of the Exchange were produced in 1986 under the editorship of Jack Arthur but that was all. For a short while there was no national publication.

Enter the Handshake Again

Over these decades the B.C. Handshake with few lapses, brought news to the AOTS men of that Province. In 1986 John Carswell realized the need to revive this means of communication. It was a rebirth of the publication. With no financial assistance, it moved ahead on faith and hard work. At one printing there was no visible sign of money, time was running out, but never the less John gave the order to "Run It!" By the time the printer's bill came in there were sufficient donations on hand to cover same. Thus proving once again that our God is never too early and never too late.

At the National Annual meeting in Duncan in 1988 National President Ernie Stafford asked John if this paper could be the national vehicle of communication. Being fully aware of the real need, John had a vision of how the paper would come about. To follow a vision calls for faith, this was done and the National Handshake went to press.

The first edition had ample news and pictures from the Annual meeting but news from across the rest of the country was slow in coming . John set off on a campaign in a search for reporters, news, and photographs and as time progressed this network fell into place and is working well. With a solid modus operandi established he introduced colour coded regional newsletters and posters. Samples are enclosed. Plans to include Ontario are in the works. We are looking for 3 or 4 people from this area to gather news and pictures which will be edited as the Ontario Newsletter. Volunteers please contact "The Handshake ".(See page 2 for address)

John and his committee hope that you enjoy the Handshake as much they enjoy producing it for you. Through "The Handshake" we are reaching not only AOTS but many other individuals, sometimes just one, sometimes a group, who all share the joy of serving Jesus Christ just as we do.

Five Extra Pages Inside

**The Handshake Editorial Committee
John Carswell Chairman**
