

‘FRIENDS OF BURRILL’ Newsletter 2017.

Dear friends,

It has been quite sometime since I have written, and much has happened here at The Pines. We continue to thank God that The Bush Missionary Society, which began in 1856, continues to operate from our facility here on the South Coast. To the best of our ability we continue to fulfil our purpose, which is to: “Further the Scriptural knowledge of Jesus Christ without reference to sectarian differences.”

In December 2015 we welcomed Craig and Emily Pacey, with their two children, Pearl and Joe to the management team. Their pleasant, enthusiastic and welcoming natures have made a positive impact on the visitors to our site, for which we are very grateful.



Above: Pacey's Family Photo

‘FRIENDS OF BURRILL’ Newsletter 2017.

Nathan and Lauren Ross have been with us for five years now, and they continue to be a faithful driving force for the ministry of our site and into the wider community. Kerry and I this year mark thirty years of service here at The Pines and we both acknowledge that the years have come and gone so quickly. At our stage in life we are so thankful for the young, reliable team God has blessed us with. We look forward to what God will do with their lives and ministry here, in the days ahead.

A number of projects have been completed alongside the every day maintenance that is required on a site like The Pines. A children’s playground has been installed at Lagoon Point, and an extra bedroom and outdoor deck has been built on to Nathan and Lauren’s house, giving Lucas and Layla a bedroom of their own and somewhere for the family to enjoy outdoor eating and relaxation. A number of rooms have been renovated at the Motel, proving to be much appreciated by guests. Double beds are now a feature in every room at the Conference Centre and new furniture has been installed in the Dining-lecture room as well as a large screen TV-monitor. Much needed drainage has been carried out on the property in accordance with local council requirements.



Above: Children’s Playground Under Construction

‘FRIENDS OF BURRILL’ Newsletter 2017.



Above: Children's Play Ground Finished



Above: Renovated Motel Room 5

‘FRIENDS OF BURRILL’ Newsletter 2017.



Above: Dining/Lecture Room

We are very grateful to The Stewards Foundation who generously donated funds for the purchase of a new Toyota utility as we were told that the old work-ute was not fit to be re-registered. It served us well for many years. Their thoughtfulness towards our ministry was very humbling, meeting an important need. A new heavy-duty ride-on mower was also purchased and is a genuine asset needed to maintain the grassed areas of such a property as we have.

Over the years, we have been blessed with many volunteers who freely give of their time and their funds to help us in so many ways. We continue to be grateful for Rachael Horne and her fellowship in Canberra, Peter Males and Dennis and Jennifer Hine and Peter Snape who behind the scenes have provided much needed help in times when our own efforts have been exhausted and insufficient. Peter and Glenda Taylor and Harry and Anne Wood, Grant and Becky Emans and Andrew and Erin Iskander are more couples that have often ‘remembered our needs’ for which we are thankful.

‘FRIENDS OF BURRILL’ Newsletter 2017.

Our ‘Sunday evenings around God’s word’ continue to be well attended. Nathan’s leadership, Craig’s Kids Talks and Kerry’s piano playing all work together to enhance our time considering the teaching of the scriptures. Kerry’s ladies Bible Study has been moved from our home in Termeil to the meeting room at the Pines and there is a regular group of local men who gather for prayer at the Conference Centre on Monday nights. The Scripture Union Family Mission continues to operate in the summer season and is much appreciated by visitors to the site.

Les and Kerry continue their teaching ministry on Monday afternoons, Tuesday nights and Thursday nights, as well as a regular preaching ministry in many different denominations. This extends from Bateman’s Bay in the south to Moruya, Tuross Heads and Narooma, and many other rural locations, extending even to Western Australia. Kerry and Les continue to conduct Bible teaching courses in Russia, India and Turkmenistan among persecuted believers.

Lauren is part of a team of local girls that conduct a ‘Mums and Bubs’ playtime at the local Anglican Church, where they seek to reach out to local mothers and families. Late in 2016, Les finally had his book released and it has been well received. It is a product of 35 years of teaching the scriptures and is entitled “UNDER THE FIG TREE”... ‘Expository reflections on the scriptures for each day’. I am very grateful to Emily for her Graphic design skills in designing the book covers.

We have much to be grateful for. Operating a ‘not for profit’ small business to support the work of mission is no small task in these days of huge operating costs. It is no secret that we have struggled to keep the doors open, and during 2014-2015 I really felt that we would not survive any further, and to say that Kerry and I became despondent would be an understatement. Yet, the God that we serve is so often an ‘eleventh-hour’ God who tests our commitment to our calling and our willingness to do some ‘hard yards’. So far, we have been blessed with enough to survive and some more to spend. Yes, indeed we ‘walk by faith and not by sight.’

Thank you to all our supporters and to those who continue to pray for us.

Yours in Christ,
Les Stewart.

‘FRIENDS OF BURRILL’ Newsletter 2017.

DEVOTIONAL.

“The Lord stood by me and gave me strength to proclaim the message fully.”

2 Timothy 4:17

These words are among the last words written by the apostle Paul as he awaited death in a Roman prison. We can only imagine what Paul’s last days were like and what he as a faithful servant of The Lord Jesus and the saving Gospel of Grace experienced. We read that he longed for Timothy’s fellowship and he wanted him at his side before winter so he could enjoy the warmth of his cloak and the fellowship of his young companion. Demas had deserted him and Dr. Luke was his only visitor, yet he hoped for the arrival of Mark as well. Above all, he wanted his ‘books and his parchments’ that were no doubt a strong testimony to his desire to study and to make notes until the ‘time of his departure’ finally arrived. This beloved apostle is an example to us all of true values in the face of death and the great privilege it is to have the scriptures in a language we can easily read and consider during the days of our earthly pilgrimage.

I personally often reflect on the scene that Paul describes for us in vs. 17. There was Paul, standing alone in one of those great Roman basilicas’ and he makes his defence of the gospel and his apostolic ministry knowing that he would not be acquitted at this trial and that he would be sentenced to death at his next. This must have been one of the greatest moments of human history and gospel proclamation. Without a friend or companion he rises to his feet and ‘proclaims the message fully’, yet he does not feel alone for he had already stated ‘that the Lord stood by me and gave me strength’.

We can only picture what this incident would have been like. Paul was the most famous prisoner in the world during the middle of the first century. His preaching and teaching had changed and renovated so many pagan cities by the grace of God and the power of His Holy Spirit. The Kingdom of God had come among the Gentiles, and every dark corner of the world had begun to be ‘lit up’ with the transforming light of the Gospel. Thousands would have been there as voyeuristic onlookers of this trial as Paul was tried before the world’s most powerful man Caesar, in the world’s capital, Rome.

‘FRIENDS OF BURRILL’ Newsletter 2017.

Yet, here Paul’s final hour may well have been his finest. To this great throng, in the capital of the Roman Empire, Paul did not speak in defence of his own life nor for his own life, rather he spoke only of the Gospel in all its fullness. Humility and power were displayed together as only the God fearing saints of God are committed to doing. Alone or in the company of thousands the Gospel is as the Hymn writer put it...’ a story to tell to the nations that will turn their hearts to the Lord.’

It is good to take heart from this incident. Men and women all over the world appear to stand-alone and testify to the saving grace of God. Some, indeed thousands, will do it even at the cost of their own lives and families. Yet they stand in God’s strength, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Some folk do it alone in marriage and family life. Others do it in our schools and in their places of work. Some do it in congregations that are struggling to survive. In dark places around the world faithful ones testify to the truth for many years and even in their lifetimes see no visible signs of fruit. One thing is for sure, like the apostle Paul, they do not stand alone, for their strength and their calling is from God.

Perhaps you feel alone, mocked by those around you and it appears that you are making no progress for the cause of Christ in your community. Take heart from Paul’s experience for sometimes when you feel all have abandoned you and all is lost, it may well in fact by God’s grace and wisdom be your finest hour.

May God bless His word,
Les.