THE AUSTRALASIAN PENTECOSTAL STUDIES CENTRE

Quarterly Newsletter - Spring Edition



A brief note on music in early Pentecostalism...* A prevalent theme in the recent Pentecostal and Charismatic symposium, co-convened by the Australasian Pentecostal Studies Centre and Western Sydney University, was the relationship between contemporary

Pentecostal/Charismatic music and its momentum behind the denomination's growth and transnational movement trajectories. Yet, this contemporary phenomenon also has a rich historical legacy - musical figureheads, street evangelism, instrumental worship and a cultural emphasis on oratory expression together compose a compelling narrative that elevates music to more than a mere note in the movement's historical narrative, to a phenomenon which was foundational to the movement's overall composition from birth.

Early footage of Richmond Temple's congregants, donated by Inez Sturgeon, depicts open-air evangelism, melodically composed by various string instruments, accordions, a horn, pianola and singers. Based in Melbourne, Richmond Temple was one of the major Pentecostal assemblies in the early 20th century and by 1928, the congregation was 240 members strong, comprising a flourishing musical culture with its own choir and orchestra. Nevertheless, music-making reverberated beyond formal structures, and based on written sources, was an integral part of the every-day expression of the movement's adherents. In December 1928, a congregation member was so moved by the charismatic expression of worship through tongues and song, they exclaimed, "the singing in the Spirit at this service is like a heavenly choir, the harmony is perfect, and it ceases together, and you realise you are standing in His presence shut in with Him." ("Richmond Temple," *The Australian Evangel*, December 1928, p.7)

Further north, a prominent Pentecostal figure, William Booth-Clibborn of the Glad Tidings Tabernacle in Brisbane in 1929, was a strong believer in distinguishing Pentecostal style and service from other denominational traditions. A profoundly musical man, Booth-Clibborn orchestrated his ministry around the power of music and it was not uncommon for his talks to involve the accompaniment of violin, piano and songs of praise from the crowd. In addition, he instigated an 150-voice choir, forming the centre piece of worship services and a central component of Clibborn's ecclesial structure.

Probably one of the most historically and materially significant objects of the APSC collection is an 100-year-old concertina, owned by 'Pastor Sinclair' and played in early 20th century Brisbane street 'open airs.' Donated by Janice Boddy in 2012 (wife of former Glad Tidings Tabernacle senior pastor, Alan Boddy), the instrument is a physical remnant of the musical culture of early Australian Pentecostalism. Other sources in the archive, including a host of written material in denominational publications, point to the profound relationship between spiritual expression and music-making. In many cases, music-making moved beyond a simple act to a profound experience and expression of faith.



Images sourced from "Birth of the C.B.C.", 16 mm film still, c.1948, donated by Inez Sturgeon (2012).

For more reading see: Barry Chant, *The Spirit of Pentecost: The Origins and Development of the Pentecostal Movement in Australia* 1870-1939, (Lexington KY: Emeth Press, 2011)

PRESERVATION AUSTRALIA DISASTER COMBO WORKSHOP



Specialised training in collection preservation for damaged materials was provided by Kay Söderlund from Preservation Australia on August 16th at Alphacruics College. The college's APSC, Library and WHS staff attended the workshop along with ANZTLA members from Eva Burrows College, the Uniting Church Synod Archives, Sydney Missionary Bible College and Campion College Australia. Disaster preparedness is a central component of Collection Management and involves the implementation of a disaster preparedness plan. Topics such as significance assessment, reducing risk and prioritising actions, response and recovery, were a feature of the training. The afternoon submerged into a mock flood scenario and numerous wet paper-based, textile, ceramic and framed works were salvaged by a now expert disaster management team! This was an opportunity to put into practice the principals of team management, assessment of damage, allocation of tasks, documentation of damage and recovery of wet materials. With training now provided, the APSC and Library staff at AC will compile collection-specific plans which will ensure that in the case of a disaster, appropriate action is taken to ensure the long-term preservation of our precious collections! Alphacruics College expresses its gratitude to the National Library of Australia for funding the workshop and to Preservation Australia, particularly Kay Soderlund, for delivering such an informative, high quality workshop.

SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2019





PENTECOSTAL CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITIES & MIGRATION

A few weeks ago, the Third Annual Symposium, Pentecostal Charismatic Christianities and Migration, culminated in dialogue around the various historical and anthropological facets of Pentecostal and Charismatic transnational movements. The keynote address provided by Associate Professor Richard Vokes (Anthropology of Development, University of Western Australia) brought Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies into dialogue with Refugee Studies, challenging concepts of people "movement" within each area of study. Our keynote's case study on refugee-background African-Australian based in Perth and Adelaide and their movement 'back' to Africa as an outcome of conversion to PC/C in Australia, challenged notions of the 'static', 'settled refugee status.' As such, Vokes presented a rationale for Pentecostal African - Australians as one of the most internationally mobile people in Australia. Other papers considered the historical forerunners of subsequent migration trends; the relationship between popular Christian music and migration, and South to North connections.



PUBLICATIONS

Asia Pacific Pentecostalism is the latest major contribution to scholarship in Pentecostal studies. Edited by Assoc. Prof. Denise A. Austin (DVP Research and Standards, Alphacrucis College), Assoc. Prof. Jacqueline Grey (Dean of Theology, Alphacruics College) and Prof. Paul Lewis (Assoc Dean and Professor of History and Intercultural Studies, AOG Theological Seminary), the volume draws together the origin, growth, leadership and development narratives of the denomination from variously geographic, historical, theological and sociological perspectives. The volume makes a strong case for the contribution of Pentecostalism in the Asia Pacific region to Global Christianity, facilitated through various figures such as Yonggi Cho from Korea, missionary activity in Fiji and the global worship revolution established by Hillsong church.

The Australasian Pentecostal Studies Journal* has recently published a Special Issue titled, "Dreaming and Spirit-filled Christianity," exploring the intersection between Aboriginal and Christian (particularly Pentecostal) spiritualities. The project emerged out of a desire to amplify the Aboriginal voice in the discussion of the spiritual experiences and identities of Aboriginal Christians in their navigation of the Dreaming and Pentecostal Christian spiritualities.

The special issue includes co-authored articles by Indigneous Pentecostal leaders from various nations in Australia; a series of published interviews conducted by the project team with Indigenous leaders, and an Editorial by Tanya Riches (Hillsong College). Importantly, the project acknowledges biases implicit in the western academic tradition and stylistic choices such as structuring articles in narrative form and heavy emphasis on the spoken word (interviewing Aboriginal Pentecostal people) elevate the voice of Indigenous peoples.

Notably, the articles together represent the diverse nature of Aboriginal spirituality and the Issue's Editorial makes particular effort not to summaries the perspectives of the various authors. In fact, the very purpose of the project is to make a case for the variety of Indigneous spiritual identities and perspectives and in so doing, challenge common misconceptions and generalisations around ideas of 'legitimacy', 'indigenaeity' and identity.

The project makes an important contribution to the academy and broader discussions around the negotiation of spiritualities in the Australian context, providing a 'bedrock' for futher dialogue in this area. It is the hope of the project team that this journal issue will educate readers on the profound spiritual knowledge of Aboriginal Elders and leaders, provide momentum for further discussion in academic and non-academic contexts, and most of all, raise up Aboriginal Christian leaders.

*The APS is an open-source peer-reviewed journal of Alphacrucis College and can be accessed here: https://aps-journal.com/index.php/APS

IN OTHER NEWS...

Fifty Days Press is an emerging publishing company providing publishing in Australian Christian fiction and non-fiction works. In addition to trade publishing, Fifty Days Press provides professional publishing and editorial services for self-published and corporate/business projects. If you are interested to find out more, please email contact@fiftydays.com.au, or to submit a manuscript or inquire about submissions please email submissions@fiftydays.com.au



"Choir and Orchestra of Richmond Temple, with their leader (sister Bently) and Pastor C. L. Greenwood," *Australian Evangel*, December 1928, p. 7