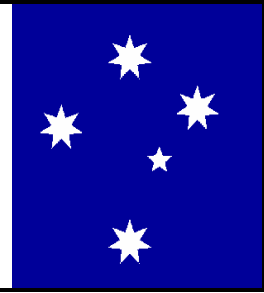




The Southern Cross Project

Dwight & Brenda Whitsett
Extra --July 2005



🌐 Greetings from Australia! It has been good to be back in the land of the Southern Cross. My time in New Zealand was very good and fruitful. South Pacific Bible College is doing an excellent work teaching students from New Zealand, the South Pacific Islands and even some students from the US and Australia. It was good to visit with Steve Raine, David Nelson and Mike Austin (and their families) who lead the school. Charles and I were able to visit with Steve about some possible ways in which Sunset could potentially be of benefit to their operation.

🌐 Ben Walker, the AIM coordinators in Tauranga and I spent at least two hours talking about the work of AIM teams there...past, present and future. As I mentioned in the previous report, the present team is working well and doing some good evangelism under difficult circumstances.

🌐 Charles Speer and I had just been talking about driving carefully when a young man driving a Mercedes Benz almost creamed us at an intersection while he was taking me back to my quarters. Thankfully, with Charles' great driving, we were able to avoid a serious accident. We exchanged paint and obtained a few dents but no major damage. We still had to wait 45 minutes for the police to show up and make a report. Close! It is harrowing to have an accident anywhere, but especially in a "foreign" country

🌐 I especially enjoyed meeting with men from the Islands who have trained at SPBC. Men from Fiji and Tonga were there to give us reports on what the Lord is doing through them. These are great men who labor hard in lonely places. During a few short days we were able to establish a great relationship that I hope to develop further on subsequent visits. They were very appreciative of my presentations and made very encouraging comments. Samu, who is a chieftan, (pictured at right)



Preparing for the "Hangi" a Maori dinner cooked in the ground



from Fiji gave me a note which I will always cherish. He wrote, "You came at just the right time for me. Praise God for bringing you here. I am fired-up after your classes." Bimlesh

from Suva said, "You have stirred my Spirit – you have given me renewed purpose." Others from the Islands and from New Zealand made similar comments. I will always remember the

Islanders and Kiwis and this time together. It has been very good to be with fellow American workers Jerome Williams and Mark Woodward (Director of Let's Start Talking).

🌐 From New Zealand it was on to Sydney. It was good to stay with Peter and Marina Gray at the "Hotel de Gray." We go back a long way to the days of our work in Adelaide. Marina's families, the Colleys, were among the "founding families" of our work there. The Grays are strong leaders in the church in New South Wales. Friday night we visited a Bible study of the West Church, one of the spin-offs of the Sydney Church of Christ. We had a very good meeting with Miles and Geordie, two significant leaders in this former International Church of Christ group.

🌐 The following day, dear friend, fellow-worker and hostess, Val Colley (Marina's mum and my "keeper" for the next few days) picked me up and we traveled into the foothills of the Blue Mountains for a retreat with area Christians at the Meroo Christian Centre. It was quite a trip



Gathering at Meroo Christian Centre

since she didn't remember how to get there and I certainly didn't. Nevertheless, I drove and Val navigated. After wandering around for a couple of hours, we finally got there before lunch.

Sunday, we had an excellent time of worship and got in some good visiting friends old and new. It was great to see Steven Randall from Canberra and the "Gosford Girls" on the AIM team. One of the high points was again seeing Bob and Lynne Marks for the first time in 30 years! Bob preaches for one of the churches in Sydney. I was also able to begin important discussions with Stuart Penhall, David Mowday and David Payne from the church in Gosford (more about the topic and the outcome in the next report).

We continued our discussions the following

Wednesday. I know I haven't yet given much specific information, but please keep us in your prayers.

🌐 I am scheduled to preach for the Sydney Church of Christ this Sunday. They have also asked me to teach a class/seminar on singing. I will be staying with the Meskers (Rick is one of the elders of this church) from Friday through Sunday. I am very much looking forward to face-to-face visits with brothers with whom I have only spoken on the telephone and e-mails. Please give this a place in your prayers also.

We are very excited about the work God is doing in this region. What a joy to be used by Him in the accomplishment of His will! Thank you for your partnership and continued prayers. Without you, this could not be happening.

Dwight and Brenda