

A.B.F. Fall Conference
September 24/25, 1993
 Annapolis Royal
 First United Baptist Church

Theme:
 "The Face of Violence in our Society"

Friday

- 6:30 p.m. Registration
- 7:00 p.m. Opening Devotions: The President
- 7:15 p.m. Welcome: Rev. Derrick Marshall
- 7:30 p.m. Lecture: "Violence in our Religious Tradition"
 Rev. Dr. Gerry Harrop
- 8:30 p.m. Break
- 8:45 p.m. The Service of Holy Communion
- 9:00 p.m. Reception

Saturday

- 9:00 a.m. Devotions: Lic Jennifer Smart
- 9:20 a.m. Introductions, Notices
- 9:30 a.m. Lic. Kirby Smart: "Violence: The Pastor's Viewpoint"
 Rev. Terry Tingley: "Violence and the Media"
 Ed Colquhoun: "Violence Among Youth: The School Scene"
- 10:25 a.m. Coffee Break
- 10:40 a.m. Panel Discussion and Questions from Assembly
 Rev. Adele Crowell (Chair)
 Ed Colquhoun
 Rev. Terry Tingley
 Lic. Kirby Smart
 Rev. Gerry Harrop
- Noon** Dinner at the Church
- 1:00 p.m. Business Meeting
- 3:00 p.m. Dismiss

BILLETS: ABF CONFERENCE: Contact Rev. J.D. Marshall
 Church: 532-2134 or Parsonage: 532-7067

Some ABF'ers will be interested in the Annapolis Royal Public Gardens, as well as Fort Anne and the Habitation Historic Museums. Families will enjoy the Up-Per Clements Theme Park, minutes away.

ABF BULLETIN

Next Issue - Dec. 6, 1993
 Deadline for Articles: Nov.12.

ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP
BULLETIN

Thoughts on Atlantic Baptist College

— Rev. John E. Boyd —

At our recent Convention, Atlantic Baptist College announced plans to move to a new site and to build a campus at an approximate cost of \$13 million. Funds are to be raised from the government and business sectors as well as from individuals and local churches.

Although announced at Convention, no opportunity was given for discussion of this major development or its implications for other aspects of our mission as Atlantic Baptists.

Why should there be debate re: ABC at the Assembly level? I believe that Atlantic Baptists are getting in "over our heads" financially. Our Convention budget has not been met for many years, even though it is pared to the minimum, with major requirements for Home Missions, Christian training, and national and international efforts by CBF and CBIM not being met. ABC's effort to raise at least \$6 million from Baptist individuals and Churches will have a negative impact on other aspects of our work.

Further, is it not poor stewardship for Atlantic Baptists to be developing and supporting our own undergraduate university at a time when these small provinces are served (some would say over-served) by 12 English-speaking and 2 French-speaking institutions of higher learning, all of them looking at government-directed rationalization due to high costs? Could we not find another way to accomplish our goals in higher education? Should we not give our education dollars exclusively to our seminary, which provides our Churches with trained pastoral leadership.

Should we not at least have the opportunity to debate these issues on the floor of convention?

Rev. John E. Boyd - First Baptist Church, Halifax

Comment on the United Baptist Convention Meeting (1993)

by Elaine Anne MacGregor

Those attending the August 19th and 20th meetings of Convention expecting to see reflected in the Convention program and its presentation the diversity of beliefs and practices of the delegates in attendance must have been sorely disappointed. There was no use of inclusive language in the hymns, prayers or sermons. The representation of women on boards and committees and among the officers is dismal. The Convention program, schedule and setting did not allow delegates to gather informally to discuss issues of concern nor to raise issues from the floor to debate. This was not a Convention by or for the delegates and especially was not by or for women delegates. The purpose of Convention meetings should not just be to hear reports and vote on year old resolutions but also to provide a forum for discussion and reflection on current issues among the delegates.

ABF Fall Assembly

"The Face of Violence in our Society" will be the theme of the ABF Fall Assembly, at the First United Baptist Church, Annapolis Royal, N.S., September 24th and 25th. The conference schedule is outlined on page 16.

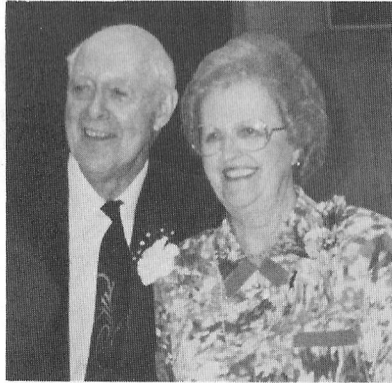
SEPTEMBER 1993



ABF EXECUTIVE

President:	Mr. Edward Colquhoun, Amherst, N.S.
1st V.P.:	Ms. Elaine Anne MacGregor, Halifax, N.S.
2nd V.P.:	Rev. Adele Crowell, Halifax, N.S.
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Fiftieth Wedding Anniversaries



Yvonne and Earl Ward



Jean & Vin Rushton

BEST WISHES!

ABF BULLETIN

Editor: Rev. Terry Tingley, Box 10, Site 23, RR#4
Armdale, N.S., B3L 4J4 (902) 852-4405

The Bulletin is mailed to interested churches and individuals. Those wishing to receive the Bulletin, and all details of changes of address, are to be sent to the **Distribution Organizer:** Mrs. Isobel Horton, P.O. Box 586, Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0.

The Irony of Baptist History

Gerry Harrop

The irony of Baptist history is that we are the victims of our own success. We have largely achieved our original *raison d'être* and we wonder where we go from here.

The voluntary principle in religion means, among other things, that there must be a free church in a free state. From the beginning we opposed all theocracies whether they be of Rome, or Canterbury, or Geneva or Salem, or wherever! Our conviction was that given "a level playing field", truth will prevail. We stood with such advocates of freedom as John Milton and Roger Williams.

We helped mightily in the disestablishment of religious institutions and theological orthodoxy everywhere, including Canada. Even in societies which still maintain some tokens of religious establishment, like the United Kingdom, all citizens are free to believe and practise any religion, or none. No religious community is protected by law or threatened thereby.

The price of this attainment of religious freedom has been the arrival of the liberal and secular state. Therefore, the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed amid the proclamation of other gospels and ideologies. Our faith must be that our Gospel will be heard if faithfully preached. We are often tempted to denounce "secular humanism" and sometimes even advocate its restriction. In being so tempted we are invited to abandon our tradition. Chairman Mao dared to say "let a thousand flowers bloom", believing in the triumph of communism. Dare we claim less for our faith in the free market of ideas that we advocated, sometimes at great price.

— Editorial Comment —

Involving Young Members

During his recent North American Tour, Pope John Paul II told America's bishops they had a great responsibility to help young people discover the spiritual values of Christianity and must do more to attract and keep them in the Church. Participants in an International Youth Forum preceding World Youth Day said young people desire an even greater role in the Church. Many now serve on parish councils.

It would be interesting to know the average age of delegates who participated in the AUBC annual assembly in August. There are **many young** men and women with experience and ability in our churches who should be considered by the nominating committee for membership on Convention boards and committees. And, more local churches must begin sharing duties and responsibilities of officers and committees with talented young people. We must give youth a sense of belonging.

Violence

Television increases young viewers' appetites for becoming involved with violence. The "crusade" underway to curb violence on TV was overdue! Hopefully, home video rentals will be included in reforms. Children are viewing dramatized violence with few, if any, restrictions. Youth violence is getting out of hand.

BAPTISM - What is God Doing?

By M.R. Cherry

We are quite clear as to what we are doing when we baptize. We are immersing believers in Christ into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The proper candidate is one who has believed in Christ as his/her personal Saviour; the "agent" or administrator, is another believer (as a rule, one duly authorized by the Church to baptize); the "matter" is water; and the "form" is the formula, "I baptize you into (or in) the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

But we are not so clear when we are asked, "What is God doing in baptism?" When this writer persisted in asking this question in a seminar on baptism, one of the participants responded, "I wish you would quit asking that question; you sound too much like a Catholic." Yet St. Paul said, "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body". (1 Cor. 12:13). Only the Holy Spirit can make baptism Christian baptism. The most important thing in baptism is not what we are doing but what God is doing.

Baptism is a sign, but it is more than a sign. It is also a symbol. A sign only points, whereas a symbol participates in that to which it points. As a symbol, baptism participates in that to which it points. It does so as a means of grace. A means of grace is that by means of which God comes to us and we come to God.

Baptism is that means of grace by means of which God adds to his church those who repent of their sins and believe in Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Those who heard Peter and the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost said, "Brethren, what shall we do?"; and Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38). It is further recorded that "those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls...And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:41,47). God is active in baptism, adding to his Church those who believe.

By means of the act of baptism, God's mighty act of redemption is proclaimed. St. Paul asked the Christians at Rome, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4). Baptism proclaims that God has united the believer to Christ and that in Christ the believer has died to sin, has been buried, and has been raised to live the resurrection life.

In Baptism we should be concerned primarily with what God has done and is doing, not with what we are doing. The reader will have to take it from here. The important thing to remember is that baptism bears witness first to the grace of God and only then to the response of faith.

(All Scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.)

ABF SPRING ASSEMBLY IN WOLFFVILLE



Ms Elaine Anne MacGregor
Devotional Speaker



President
Ed Colquhoun



Panel: Dr. Rumscheidt with ABF'ers: (l - r)
Reverend's Adele Crowell (chair); John Boyd; Mark McKim



Food.....Fellowship....



Overflow Crowd...

Dr. Rumscheidt Addressed Assembly

"The Resurgence of the Radical Right in Our Time" was the theme of addresses given by Rev. Dr. Martin Rumscheidt of the Atlantic School of Theology at the Spring Assembly of ABF. The speaker provided descriptive materials in considering the following:

C) Thesis One:

"the radical right is the very flip-side of the coin, the other side of which is liberalism; what distinguishes one from the other is that the radical right is more open to violence in the abuse it engages in."

Thesis Two:

"the resurgence - indeed, the very emergence - of the radical right is a process, like the resurgence of nationalism - of democracy in decay, that works in all sections of society. It is a process not of power - if power means the ability to be for others - but of might - in the sense of being only for oneself."

"The radical right," Dr. Rumscheidt said "sees itself as a moral force upholding law and order, or in the absence of law and order, seeking to create a law and order in line with its ideology and kind: purist, racist, nationalistic, patriarchal, heterosexual, patriotic, and so forth. An important breeding ground for the radical right is the economic recession, the most lethal threat to the bourgeoisie - more lethal than war, natural disaster or epidemic - a growing unemployment or the accelerated increase of surplus-people and the concomitant competition for jobs ever becoming cheaper and cheaper to those who manage them. The radical right needs something else, though, to grow, it needs - with the recession - a sector of the population who seeks to extend by legal means as well as by actual activity - to an increasing number of people the privilege of basic human rights, rights once won by the privileged bourgeoisie for itself in its long struggle against the feudal classes. This positive aspect of the liberal bourgeoisie can then be attacked as "liberalism" by those who argue that the "undeserving" do not "deserve" the fruit of "our" struggles - unless, of course, they have the cash to buy that fruit. The rich are never mentioned in this context anyway; no one questions their freedom of movement.

For businessmen from Hong Kong the acquisition of a Canadian passport is no problem. Swiss citizenship, too, is for immigrants from any country whatsoever only a question of price. Drug and arms dealers recognize no distinctions of race and are far above nationalism. Where the bank account looks good, xenophobia disappears, as if by magic. But strangers are all the stranger if they are poor. To this has to be added that the social consequences of the structural changes which have taken place in Western industrialized nations are intensified in a recession. One of the most discernible signs of the resultant feeling of helplessness - more prevalent in males than females and of disorientation is the now often sited disaffection with politics. Political parties in nearly all Western countries enjoy low popularity, irrespective of their orientation; this is one of the reasons why extremist parties are on the rise and are gaining strength.

Finally, one more differentiation: skin-heads may well be dangerous, especially when they do their "swarming", but to become extreme-rightists they require the discipline of organizational structure, clear, inviolable lines of authority, sharply set up hierarchy, chain of command, tight planning, image and place of "leaders".

Book Review

By Harold L. Mitton

Donald Bridge & David Phipers, The Water That Divides, InterVarsity Press, Leicester, England, 1977.

Donald Bridge is minister of Frinton Free Church in Essex, and David Phipers is engaged in the auxiliary pastoral ministry of the Church of England. With mutual respect they set forth differing views on the subject of baptism in a valuable little book entitled **The Water That Divides**. What strikes one about the book is its fairness and balance. There is no attempt to score points or to deepen the division between those who practice paedobaptism and those who practice believer's baptism. Yet relevant Scriptural passages are examined with honesty, and no effort is made to conceal the bitterness that has attended the baptism debate throughout the church's history.

It is conceded at the outset that with the rare exception of groups like the Quakers and the Salvation Army, Christians of all traditions, denominations and persuasions have baptized, and have regarded baptism as the means of entry into the church. But three questions have divided Christendom with respect of baptism. Who should be baptized? How should baptism be administered? And what does baptism mean?

Paedobaptists (by far the larger segment in Christendom), in defending the practice of infant baptism, make a great deal of the instances of household baptism in the apostolic church, the doctrine of prevenient grace, and the appeal to covenant theology, going so far as to equate baptism with circumcision as a rite of initiation into the community of God's people. Baptists in the 16th century, and their antecedents before them, insisted that repentance and saving faith must precede baptism, and that entrance to the Kingdom of God required a resolute, personal choice.

It was Augustine with his emphasis on original sin that made infant baptism the norm for a millennium, equating, as he did, baptism with the forgiveness of sin. As the co-authors point out, if baptism possessed regenerating effect, and if to die unbaptized consigned one to eternal damnation, why should baptism be delayed? Dissenters from this view in pre-Reformation times, and after, suffered cruel persecution for their insistence that salvation was the result of a believing response to the preached Word, not by sacerdotalism of any kind. They contended that what was at stake was the principle of regenerate church membership.

Bridge and Phipers point out that paedobaptists seek to safeguard this principle through the sacrament of confirmation in which the person being confirmed makes personal the commitment made on her or his behalf by believing parents at the time of baptism. Apparently not all paedobaptists are happy with the disjunction between infant baptism and confirmation; currently there are some who argue that confirmation denigrates the crucial importance of baptism. Indeed, there are those who believe that baptized infants should receive the rite of Holy Communion.

The co-authors are at pains to indicate that not all the ambiguities or difficulties lie on one side of the baptism debate. Problems for paedobaptists center upon whether infant baptism should be private or public, whether baptism should be administered only to the children of obviously Christian parents, and whether infant baptism possesses,

Continued on Page 8

in and of itself, saving efficacy. Those who practice believer's baptism have their problem, too. If baptism is not a saving ordinance why is it deemed to be so utterly important? Even if instruction precedes baptism, how can there be certainty that the candidate is a genuine believer? Is there not altogether too much emphasis on what the candidate does, thus reducing baptism to a mere symbol, and negating what God, the Holy Spirit, does? At what age can a child be said to have reached the years of understanding and conscious belief? If it is patently clear that sincere, deeply committed Christians exist in every communion, what right have baptists to exclude from church membership those genuine believers who come from the other side of the baptism debate?

Bridge and Phipers admit that many of these issues are not resolved easily. Both have a high view of church, and they proceed to offer suggestions for procedures which could promote mutual understanding and respect among those who make up the Body of Christ. Pastors, particularly, would profit from reading this book.

"Many of today's young people have little difficulty believing that God was in Christ. What they find hard to accept is that Christ is in the church."

- E.T. Campbell

The "Radical Right" construct the Bible as an authoritarian document and declares that we humans were made for the Bible rather than that the Bible was made for humans..."

- Dr. Martin Rumscheidt

The Atlantic Baptist Fellowship "is a religious community seeking to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

- Dr. P.G.A. Griffin - Allwood

The Objectives of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship

(Approved by the Spring Session, Wolfville, June 14-15, 1985)

The Atlantic Baptist Fellowship is a community of Baptist churches, laypersons, and ordained ministers. It is supported by voluntary contributions made by persons and churches sympathetic to its aims, which are:

- (1) to witness to the freedom implicit in the voluntary principle in religion which is the essence of the traditional Baptist position;
- (2) to affirm and celebrate Baptist participation in, and witness to the whole, visible, catholic and evangelical church of Jesus Christ;
- (3) to strengthen the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces and to encourage it to strive for the above;
- (4) to provide a forum for the discussion of doctrinal and ethical questions and social problems and policies in that spirit of tolerance and mutual respect which issues from Christian love;
- (5) to publish, at regular intervals, a Bulletin which seeks to further these aims and which describes the activities of the Fellowship and announces the agenda for its general meetings which will be held in the spring and in the autumn of each year.

Finding God In a Singles' Bar... And Other Watering Holes

- Paige Blair -

My friend Rob approached me one Sunday morning last summer saying, "I found God last night!" Rob is a very spiritual person. We often share stories about spiritual experiences and have some great theological discussions. "What brought this about?" I asked, expecting to hear of a camping trip in the vast wilds of Alaska, or an inspirational sunrise.

"Well, I was at Chilkoot's last night," Rob began... **Chilkoot Charlies?** You see, 'Koots is a notorious singles' bar in downtown Anchorage. What Rob was telling me was the equivalent of saying "I met Mother Teresa at Narcisus!" Rob had found God in a **singles' bar?** Elvis, maybe...but **God?** Well, OK.

A situation like this raises **at least** two questions of theological nature...and several that have nothing to do with theology. **The first** theological question is, at what other times has God, or the presence of God shown up at what Dean Thornburg of Marsh Chapel calls, "odd-ball places?" **The second is**, what implications does this have for the world beyond Chilkook Charlie's?

I heard the story over a cup of coffee. Rob did not usually frequent 'Koots, but for some reason, something was telling Rob to go to 'Koots. Giving in to this seemingly inescapable compulsion, Rob swung by 'Koots on the way to another club.

The first person Rob met upon walking in was a young woman called Anne and she was in danger. Anne has recently broken up with her boyfriend, who had been physically and emotionally abusive. She had also pressed charges against him that morning. Rumor around 'Koot's was that her 'Ex' was **furious**. And the news travelled even more quickly when her Ex showed up at 'Koots just a few minutes after Rob had heard Anne's story.

Though it was a horrifically ugly scene, Rob was able to get Anne away from her ex-boyfriend to a safe place.

Talk about being at the right place at the right time! Having given in to the inexplicable unavoidable urge to go to Chilkoot Charlie's, Rob was able to help. It takes very little imagination to think of the violence Anne would have faced alone had Rob **NOT** been there. Was it coincidence? Rob certainly did not think so, and neither do I. This experience was evidence for Rob that God was alive and well and working in the twentieth century world. Rob had found God, by experiencing God's influence in the world that Saturday night at, of all places, Chilkoot Charlie's.

Should this shock us? Talking about God in a singles' bar? Crazy things have happened! The presence of God has made appearances in situations even more scandalous than this. Scriptures provide us with at least two examples of times when God has shown up at odd-ball or scandalous places. Take for example, the passage from Exodus...

Imagine for a minute that you are Moses, sojourning in the wilderness with the rest of us Israelites on our way from a rather spectacular escape from Egypt, to the land of milk and honey in Canaan. We have been hungry, and Yahweh has fed us with manna and quail. And that was quite a spectacle, too. But now, we are camped out at Rephidim. And this place before us seems to be rather "God forsaken," in contrast to the land of milk and honey we have been promised. We are all thirsty...

The rest of us lose our patience and rush at you, shouting,

"Why did you bring us out of Egypt? To kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" We cry to you...And some of us get carried away and start picking up rocks, threatening to stone you.

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“What am I going to do with this people? They are about to stone me!” you cry to Yahweh. And as always, **Yahweh is the God with a Plan**, and tells you to take the stick that you had used to strike the Nile and use it...defend yourself?

Well, that might make sense. But that is not what Yahweh has in mind. “I will be standing there in front of you on the rock... Strike the rock, so that the people may drink.”

You can imagine the thoughts that might go through your mind as Moses upon receiving **this** advice from Yahweh. “Strike the **rock**? These people are thirsty! You want me to go around hitting rocks, when these people are about to bring me a violent and painful death?” Although it may not have been the most apparent solution to the problem, you do so right in front of the rest of us Israelites. And as we watch, out flows water...from a rock!...Amazing!

Here we have what may be the first evidence of dowsing for water in Ancient Israelite culture...and a story of God, the source of living water, showing up where the people least expect...from a rock. Water, from a rock...That is one of my grandmother’s favorite idioms... “Why, that’s about as easy as getting water from a rock!” Meaning that it is not easy at all! Mighty unexpected, indeed. In this case, God’s presence, standing on the rock, and God’s action in the world, represented by the water from the rock, were two ways that the Israelites found God that day at Rephidim, in the wilderness.

In the Gospel also is an example of a story about God showing up in a seemingly unlikely situation, at yet another watering hole. In this story, Jesus is resting from his most recent journey, and is sitting by Jacob’s well. And along comes a Samaritan woman, bringing a jug. Little does she know that though she expects Jacob’s well to provide thirst-satisfying water, waiting for her there is **The Messiah**, the source of **living** water.

The two of them talk, and Jesus tells her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink the water that I give will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” And the woman replies, “Hey, let me have some of this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.” Well, she doesn’t quite have the point yet, does she?

While there, the two of them engage in quite a revealing conversation, Jesus telling her “all that she had ever done.” She says to him, “I know the Messiah is coming...when he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” And Jesus replies, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.” **Surprise!**

The Messiah is simply not what you would expect to find at a well. That seems pretty obvious in and of itself.

However, it is even more unexpected when you consider the cultural and social setting in which this conversation takes place. First off, usually when you hear of women and men meeting at wells in Ancient Israelite literature you can expect a wedding in the next couple of paragraphs. An Ancient Israelite version of the singles’ bar? That might be stretching it a bit...ok, it might be stretching it a lot, but you see the analogy.

That this was a **scandalous** situation should not be neglected. This conversation in which the Messiah was revealed took place between a Samaritan and a Jew. The Samaritan and Jewish people were bitter enemies, and had been for centuries. The source of much of their enmity was due to a disagreement over where to worship God--Mt. Gerizim for the Samaritans, or Jerusalem for the Jews. It was not a question of **which** God... but **where** to worship God. It reminds me of the kind of hate which flares between the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, or the Suni and Shiite Muslims...

And not only was this conversation one which took place between enemies...it also took place between a man and a woman. Jesus was a rabbi, and rabbis simply did not speak to women in public in Ancient Israel. And this woman was the enemy, to top

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it all off! The scandal involved is revealed by the “astonished!” disciples when they return to find Jesus speaking to the woman.

And to be fair, let’s not forget the Samaritan woman’s perspective...this Jewish man was **the Messiah**. In her tradition, the Messiah was supposed to be Samaritan, not Jewish! As unlikely as it sounds in light of the culture and society of Ancient Israel, this woman had found the Messiah at that well. The Messiah! At a well!! Camels, probably, a husband...maybe...But the **Messiah**? Well, ok...

Once again, Yahweh is the God with a Plan, and uses the situation for the benefit of the gospel...

Many Samaritans of the city **believed in him** because of **the woman’s** testimony.” And later, after hearing with their own ears, they know that Jesus is truly the Savior of all the World.

I found a great quote about this passage, written by Gail R. O’Day. She is a professor of Biblical Preaching at Emory’s Candler Theological Seminary and writes, “(The reaction of the disciples) reflects traditional cultural and social conventions and expectations; however, Jesus will not be limited by such conventions and restraints. He breaks open boundaries in his conversation with the Samaritan woman; the boundary between “chosen people” and “rejected people.” (The Jews and the Samaritans). Jesus’ journey to Samaria and his conversation with the woman demonstrate that the grace of God...is available to all. **Jesus and his ministry will not be bound by social conventions.**”

As the ministry and good news of Jesus Christ can not be bound by social convention, neither can the love and salvation of an all-powerful, all-loving God be restricted to idyllic places like “the land of milk and honey.”

And though I have been handling this with an air of humour, this is a very serious subject. Today’s newspapers show that Rob’s adventure has great implications for the world outside of ‘Koots. There are still people all over this world killing each other every day because they think that God is **THEIRS** exclusively. They think that they have the only true way to worship God, that the presence of God in the world is limited to **their** places, and that manifestations of God that are different than theirs are worth bombing subways, worth street fighting, worth killing innocent people, worth wars, worth genocide.

And though you and I may have no recourse but to pray for those who are in the midst of religious conflict we can take what these stories have told us and make a difference in our lives.

We can gain comfort from the knowledge that as God was present with the Israelites in their wilderness at Rephidim, far from the land of milk and honey, God is also with us during our times of wilderness. God is there to tell us how to find water to quench the thirst of not only the body, but of the soul.

My New Testament professor at the School of Theology, Paul Sampley told us at the beginning of our New Testament intro class that the message of the New Testament is this, “God is up to something in this world...What are you going to do about it?” In other words, Yahweh is the God with a Plan...and you can be a part of it.

Look beyond those boundaries where you **expect** to find God working in this world. Open yourself to the presence of God **who is everywhere**, and is always calling you to take part in God’s work in this world. Listen for God’s voice...it may come at strange times...it may ask you to do things as unusual as going to Chilkoot Charlie’s on a Saturday night, it may ask you to do things which seem as crazy as wielding a stick...not to defend yourself against people threatening you, but to hit a rock...and when you do, watch for the life-giving water which flows, which gushes up to eternal life.

Editor’s Note: Paige Blair is a Master of Divinity Student at the Boston University School of Theology. A Chaplain Associate at Marsh Chapel, she submitted this sermon for the ABF Bulletin at the request of the Editor after he heard it broadcast on radio while in the Boston area.

UPDATE: CAMP WEGESEGUM

A Camp Wegesezum meeting was held June 11th in Riverview, N.B. Those present included: Sue Hoar, Laura Hoar, Shirley Hunt, Bob MacQuade, Margaret MacQuade, Yan Storr, John Dunnett, Eugene Thompson and Dan Jamer.

DECISIONS REACHED:

- (1) A Mission Statement is needed and should be put in writing by Sept. 1994 with reference to 1905 Basis of Union and 1925 United Church Statement. Specific attention re Homosexuality/Sexuality; Abortion; and Authority of Scripture.
- (2) A written report presented by a member if possible at Training Commission - Sept. 24th, Saint John Office.
- (3) Guidelines for Baptist Representatives in writing at September Meeting: Term of Office and Responsibilities.
- (4) Wegesezum Board will provide a list of interested Baptists for consideration of Training Commission in making a new appointment.
- (5) Wegesezum Board Incorporated consider the advantages of membership with CCI - Atlantic.
- (6) No action to sell will be taken at this time/Camp Board would certainly have first choice if property were ever to be for sale.

ABF AUTUMN ASSEMBLY '93

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL ACCOMMODATIONS ***

Amulree Bed & Breakfast	
Rates S-\$30 D&T-\$35 Cot \$10.00	532-7206
Auberge Wandlyn Royal Anne Motel	
Rates S-\$65-\$95 XP-\$8 F(18)	1-800-561-0000
Bread and Roses Country Inn	
Rates S-\$55 D-\$70-\$75 T-\$75 XP-\$10	532-5727
English Oaks B&B	
Rates S-\$35 D&T-\$40 XP-\$10	532-2066
The Garrison House Inn	
Rates S-\$45-\$65 D&T-\$48-\$68 XP-\$10	532-5750
The Hillsdale House	
Rates S-\$50 D-\$60-\$65 T-\$65-\$70 XP-\$10	532-2345
The Poplars B&B	
Rates S-\$33-\$40 D-\$35-\$42 private bath S-\$47 D-\$50 XP-\$8	532-7936
The Queen Anne Inn	
Rates D-\$50-80	532-7850
The St. George House Bed & Breakfast	
Rates S-\$35 D-\$38 T-\$45 XP-\$7	532-5286
The Turret Bed & Breakfast	
Rates S-\$30 D&T-\$40-\$42	532-5770

*** For those people crossing on the ferry from Saint John, a delegation of the Annapolis First United Baptist Church congregation will be pleased to meet you. Contact: Rev'd Derrick Marshall (532-7067) or Rev'd Robert Matthews (532-5761)

Living Religions VII - Shinto

By M.R.B. Lovesey

I suspect most of the readers of this essay will share with its author a very scant knowledge of the geography, the history of the peopling of the Japanese islands and the evolution of the people's religion in them. What is known, or rather guessed at, will probably be derived from such sources as Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera *The Mikado*, the opera *Madame Butterfly*, and books and films recording the immense cruelty of Japanese soldiery to allied prisoners-of-war in WW2. However, recent coverage of the marriage of Crown Prince Naruhito to the Harvard and Oxford-trained Masako Owada, according to full Shinto rites, may have forced us to rethink much of our understandings of the lands and the peoples of the far east.

We may recall, despite our pleasure at the biting wit of Gilbert's libretto and Sullivan's jolly music, that the play was objected to by the Japanese on the grounds that it was insulting to their emperor who in their eyes was a divine being. This condemnation effectively stopped Mrs. D'Oyly Carte's attempted revival of the play in London in the early 1900's. The cruelty of Japanese soldiers to allied prisoners-of-war is partly understandable, though by no means excused, by the war philosophy of the Shintoism of the times. The Japanese soldiers were taught never to surrender but to fight to the death for the honour of their emperor. Those who surrendered to save their lives were considered the lowest of the low and could be treated with total disrespect; tortured at will and even killed since they were less than human.

I

Shinto (named from the Chinese *shin tao* in the 8th century A.D.) means literally "the way or teaching of the gods (*kami*). " It is the indigenous, loosely organized, religious cult of Japan. It was so called to distinguish it from Buddhism when that religion came to Japan in the 6th century A.D. Shinto has no founder, possesses no official sacred book, has no dogma; but it has, nevertheless, maintained its identity through the long centuries.

Japan was peopled by various migrant groups from the Asian mainland, which were assimilated together under the leadership of the Yamato clan in the 5th century A.D. Their religion was an unsophisticated nature worship and involved sun worship among many other deities. The 5th century witnessed the coming of Chinese civilization - Confucianism, Taoism and the Yin-Yang philosophy. Buddhism, by the 7th century A.D., was practically the state religion. Shinto managed to maintain its influence among the masses of the people, particularly after the oral traditions of Shintoism were written down in the 8th century A.D.

II

The relationship between Shintoism and Buddhism varied over the centuries from peaceful coexistence to outright conflict, first one and then the other becoming dominant. The modern era began in 1867 when it was widely said there must be a unity of religion and the state, and that Japan should be modernized. The department of Shinto was established in 1868, which sought to abolish the age-old pattern of Shinto and Buddhist coexistence. In 1871 Shinto was proclaimed the national religion and Shinto shrines were designated the place of worship for all the emperor's subjects. All Shinto priests had to be appointed by the government. The emperor was declared divine and ordered to be worshipped. However this legislation, designed to secure the supremacy of Shinto over Buddhism failed, since Buddhism was too strongly embedded in Japanese life.

Continued on page 14

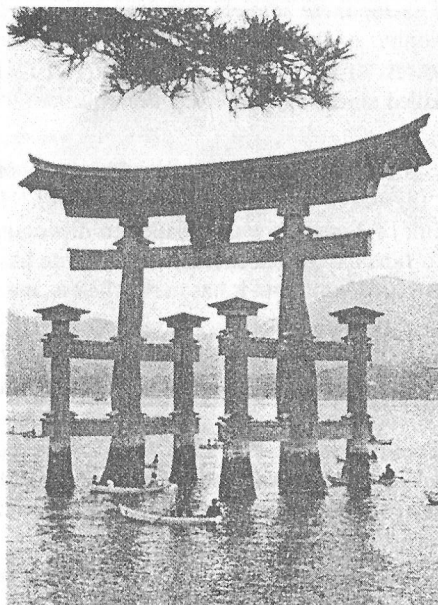
During 1872-77, the department of Shinto was replaced by the ministry of religion and education whose duty was to supervise both Shinto and Buddhism. The laws banning Christianity were repealed and, recognizing the impossibility of suppressing popular religion, it was decided to recognize and classify the latter as *Sect Shinto*, in distinction from *Shrine Shinto*. An edict of 1889 guaranteed religious freedom, but Shinto continued to be favoured, not so much as a religion as a national cult. Up to the conclusion of WW2 Shinto was manipulated by militarists and jingoistic nationalists as the spiritual weapon for guarding the state.

III

The defeat of Japan after WW2 brought about the dis-establishment of State Shinto. This was done by explicit order of the victorious allied powers. The emperor was forced to say publicly that he was not divine and that the Japanese people are not superior to other races and are not fated to rule the world. However, the ancient tradition of imperial family Shinto continued despite the fact that the imperial cult was abolished. Four shrines were set aside for the celebration of imperial household rites, the most important of which was dedicated to the sun-goddess.

Shinto shrines abound, often built in scenic surroundings. Each has two main units: an inner sanctuary and an oratory. Only priests go into the inner sanctuary where they recite prayers. The entrance to a shrine is marked by a *torii*, a simple gate. The traditional Japanese family worships not only at the shrine but daily in its home performs a simple rite before the family *kami*-shelf (*kami-dana*), dedicated to the family's tutelary deity. Many Japanese, however, belong to Sect Shinto (popular religion) seeking worldly benefits which neither Shinto nor Buddhism offer.

On June 16th, 1993, in the presence of 800 guests, Crown Prince Naruhito and his "thoroughly modern" bride-to-be, dressed in 11th century ceremonial garb, walked slowly to the ancestral shrine in the imperial palace grounds in Tokyo. They disappeared into the shrine where two Shinto priests, male and female, officiated. Naruhito read an ancient marriage vow and the couple sipped *sake* (a strong alcoholic beer made from rice) in honour of the sun-goddess. Fourteen minutes later they emerged from the shrine, now as man and wife. I wonder what passed through their minds during those few minutes of Shinto worship!



Great Torii of
a Shinto Shrine

Friends of the ABF - Update

By Dorothy M. Lovesey

We are glad to report that as a result of the recent Spring Assembly, held in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, we were able to add a few more names to our list of "Friends." We are now approaching our target of 250 members by the end of 1993, but we shall all have to make a very special effort to reach it.

The picture below was taken in the chapel basement of Acadia University at the close of the second luncheon rally of the "Friends of the ABF."



Following a splendid lunch, the 28 Friends present listened to an address, "Christianity Under Fire," by Dr. Bruce Matthews. Questions and discussion followed. Dr. Matthews is C.B. Lumsden professor and head of the department of Comparative Religion at Acadia.

At the Spring Assembly of the ABF we were delighted to have with us two loyal "Friends" from Vancouver, B.C., the Reverend Dr. J.A. Raymond and Mrs. Margaret Tingley.



Born in Sackville, N.B., Dr. Tingley attended Acadia University, graduating BA(Th) in 1930; he took the BD at Andover Newton in 1937. Active in Baptist and ecumenical circles (he served the Vancouver Council of Churches for 30 years; two periods as president), Raymond is remembered for his work among youth in Eastern Canada and his pastoring of Baptist Churches in Saint John and Dartmouth. He was secretary of the Bible Society for B.C., 1946-74. Both he and Margaret are grateful for the start in life Acadia gave them.

PLEASE JOIN US WE NEED YOU - YOU NEED US