

# AUSTRALIA



ROB ADAMS COMMUNICATING CHRISTIANITY TO CHILDREN

Open Air Campaigners can trace its roots back to Australia in the 1890s and continues to minister on the front lines of evangelism. The early history of Open Air Campaigners is recorded in James Duffecy's book, "Truceless Warfare Advances," which was published in 1983. Since that time, some notable changes have taken place in the ministry around the world as well as in Australia, the country of its birth.

One such change in Australia has been the decision to be known as OAC Ministries instead of Open Air Campaigners. At the very beginning of our history, we were known as The New South Wales Prayer Band, led by

English barrister E.P. Field, preaching to lunch-hour crowds in Martin Place, Sydney. In 1922, the name was changed to Open Air Campaigners. At this time, gospel wagons were used to reach out across New South Wales and after WWII to the rest of Australia. It was during this period that the typical sketchboard painting method became the 'trademark' of our work. Ministry expanded to New Zealand, North America, and Europe during the 1950s and '60s under the leadership of our first International President, Jim Duffecy. In 1982, due to a growing number of opportunities to conduct ministry in a wide variety of venues in addition to the open air, OAC Australia became OAC Ministries (OACM).



ANDREW WALKINGTON COUNSELING



GEOFF WESTLAKE REACHING OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY WITH THE MESSAGE OF HOPE

Today, OAC Ministries reaches out to the community with messages of hope. We aim to serve local communities, churches, and families through communicating Christian tenets, principles, and values. Our presentations always explain the core of the Christian faith, with practical implications. We are still in the open air, and many other places, too, always taking the Gospel out to where the people are, just as we have done throughout our long history.



NEIL CLARK USING THE SKETCHBOARD, STILL A USEFUL TOOL FOR EVANGELISM

Our motto, “Good News in Good Ways,” has been implemented to emphasize our burden to share the story of Jesus, as shown in the Bible. We focus on God’s desire to connect and restore people to Himself using presentations that are understandable, engaging, interactive, and adaptable for a wide variety of ages and situations.



OACM branch locations currently include Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Victoria, where the national office in Melbourne is located. Australia’s current population is over 25 million, spread out over a country

the size of the continental USA. Cities like Perth and Adelaide (South Australia) are very isolated but still have populations in excess of a million.



GEOFF WESTLAKE

Jim Duffecy’s old adage is still true, “You don’t catch fish in a bathtub; you have to go where the fish are!” People are still being reached in public venues here in Australia, but the venues have changed.

Methods have also changed to fit the times. The sketchboard still remains an effective tool, but chalk on specially designed paper is frequently used rather than paint. Quicker and more colorful presentations are possible this way. Creative object lessons have

been developed, and electronic presentations are also proving effective. The use of puppets and drama have become widespread and well received.

Additional venues of outreach include schools (primary and secondary) in most, but not all Australian states, where the potential exists to reach a whole new generation with the Gospel.

Another effective method of outreach, done in conjunction with local churches, is known as “Community Contact Weeks.” These ministry meetings include breakfasts, five-day clubs for children, and school assemblies. They are held on “neutral ground” such as community halls, restaurants, and homes, but not in churches themselves.

Training workshops are also offered by OACM, focusing on helping folks excel in evangelism, practical outreach, and ministry skills, which include sketchboard, visual aids, and puppets. Like training seminars elsewhere in the world, actual outreach is included.

Australia is also deeply involved in the affairs of Open Air Campaigners International (OACI) member nations in the person of Rob George. Rob started his ministry with OAC as a volunteer worker in 1972. He eventually came



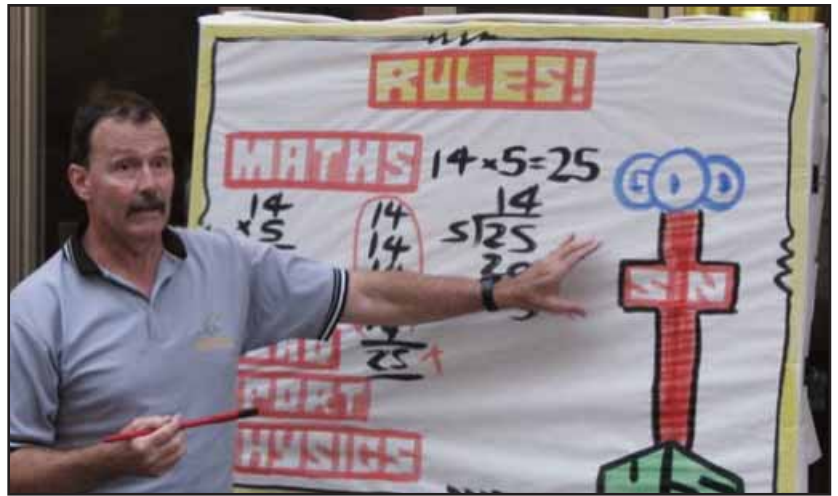
ROB ADAMS MINISTERING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS



GEOFF WESTLAKE REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION FOR CHRIST



on staff, served for many years and was elected to serve as the OACI vice-president in 2002. In 2012, he was elected as president and has been the most traveled OACI president to date! His goal was to visit every single OACI branch in each of his four-year terms. He was very able to troubleshoot issues in the branches and provided much unity to the work. In 2020, having served for eight successful years as the OACI president, Rob passed the leadership gavel over to OAC Ecuador director, David Proaño, and is now able to turn his attention with an increased focus to the ministry God has given to him in Australia.



ROB GEORGE AT THE BOARD

Looking back, we are grateful to God for the long-term staff He has provided through the years, which has been important in the stability of the work. Dawn Freeman was our incredibly significant national administrator for about 25 years serving from 1993 to 2018. Merv & Ngaire Jensen (Victoria), Rob & Cecile Adams (Western Australia), Wes & Di Fittell (retired), and Jim & Grace Vine (retired) along with Rob & Gayle George (South Australia) who have all served in one capacity or another for more than 40 years. For 58 years, Alan Bailey served the Lord with us from 1959 to 2007!



SUMMER BEACH STYLE OUTREACH

Looking at our current ministry, staff include Andrew Walkington (Queensland), Neil Clark (New South Wales), Steve Stokes (Victoria), and Geoff Westlake (Western Australia).

Geoff serves as part of the National Leadership Team with National Director, Rob George. The



OPEN-AIR MEETINGS FOR ADULTS WITH ROB GEORGE (CENTER) LEADING THE MEETING

national office is located in Melbourne. Staff includes James Minett, Emily Graham, and Carene Lim.

Looking ahead, we are trusting God for our future and are confident He will guide and provide as He has faithfully done since raising us up in 1892.



OPEN-AIR MEETINGS FOR EVERYONE