

# OACI Update

"Presenting Christ By All Means Everywhere"

Open Air Campaigners International • PO Box 14, Goodwood, SA, Australia 5034 • www.oaci.org

## A Word from the OAC International President



In this *OACI UPDATE*, you will see a glimpse of the extent of the work that OAC is doing worldwide. Some thrilling and wonderful things are happening on the front lines of evangelism. We have great staff and volunteers who are doing all this, sometimes on low budgets and in places where the use of only low-tech

materials and methods is possible. It is very effective and highly appropriate for the situation. We really appreciate your part in making it all possible through your financial gifts, your practical support and your prayer. The part you play is vital!

But, as your heart is lifted by the exciting work that is going on, take a moment to think of what makes this breadth of ministry possible.



Consider the pigeon.

Have you ever wondered why a pigeon walks so funny? It's so it can see where it is going.

A pigeon's eyes can't focus as it moves, so the bird actually has to bring its head to a complete stop between steps in order to refocus. It progresses clumsily — head forward, stop, head back, stop.

To keep our *work for the Lord* effective, we must consider our *walk with the Lord* and learn a lesson from the pigeon. We have a hard time seeing while we're on the go. We need to stop between steps — to pause and refocus on God Himself, as seen in His Word. If our work for the Lord is to be useful, then our walk with the Lord needs to have built into it a pattern of stops that enables us to see more clearly before moving on. Daniel had a practice of praying three times a day (Daniel 6:10). It was an essential part of his walk with God. He knew there's a certain kind of spiritual refocusing that we can't do without stopping.

This is done, as Daniel did, by daily drawing aside with Him, by regular attendance at our own home churches, and by occasional (annual/seasonal) extended periods of reflection, review, and prayer.

We learn a valuable lesson from the pigeon: "looking good" isn't nearly as important as "seeing well." So, enjoy the stories that follow, and remember what is behind them. Thanks, again, for the part you play!

Rob George  
OAC International President

## Rob George in South East Asia



One of the five countries of SE Asia that Rob regularly visits is Thailand. Recently Chula University, the most prestigious in Bangkok, held several open days, something that is only done once every four years. Along with the small but vibrant Christian group in that university, Rob and local workers, Johnny and Ann, had great witnessing opportunities. Mainly, it was done in small groups or one-to-one at the literature table, but surprisingly, there were also opportunities from a stage. There is a common saying in Thailand, "To be Thai is to be Buddhist." Very 'religious' people, but knowledge of the true God is very limited, so this was wonderful ministry.

## Fiji/New Zealand



In addition to the usual ministry of open-air preaching and children's ministry in schools and after-school clubs, for the first time ever, the OAC Ministries School of Evangelism (SOE) was conducted in Fiji by OAC NZ last year. Twenty-six people from different church denominations attended and continue to be involved in the Great Commission, through OAC Fiji or their local churches. We are indebted to OAC NZ for bringing the SOE to Fiji, thus enabling more people to be trained in the tools of evangelism. Another five-week SOE in Suva is planned. We pray that we will have the same number, or more, attending and that they, too, will become active in evangelism. It is hoped that branches will be formed in other urban centres of Fiji in the near future.

## Kenya



Our first mission team to Kenya came, not from the US, but from a church in Brazil. Along with Bruno, our OAC Brazil Director, Rob George and David Wilson, we went out to remote villages in Northern Kenya for evangelism with nomadic tribes. After announcing the Jesus film, people of all ages began to gather. The team performed a drama called “The Redeemer,” and the people loved it. Godfrey, our Kenyan evangelist and Director, preached after the film, and many prayed to trust Christ. A pastor with us planned to plant a church in that village. The Brazil team was ecstatic. This was repeated many times.

OAC also goes into schools. Just 100 miles from the Ethiopian border, the principal gave permission to speak to the whole school, which had 90% Muslim students. The message preached was on Noah, and the one door to the ark was applied to Christ, who is the only door of salvation. The students took in God’s Word with open hearts, which will never return void but will accomplish what He desires.

## Uganda



The schools ministry that OAC has pioneered in Uganda is outstanding! 107 trained volunteers use our methods in about 400 schools on a regular basis. That’s about 200,000 school kids who come under the sound of the Gospel, through OAC, each week! Many respond for salvation. This amazing work is overseen by our two staff, Romans based in Kampala, and Tabitha based near Masala. In addition to this, there are many other opportunities to present the claims of Christ through open-air and other outreaches.

## India



One of our Branches in India is West Bengal, located in the northeast. Our National evangelists are reaching many Bengali and Nepalese people. Recently in one open-air meeting, lightning suddenly flashed with a huge clap of thunder, sending everyone running. “Come back after the rain has stopped,” we said over the microphone. We all prayed as the rain poured down, but then it slowly began to subside. The people came back with umbrellas, and as the Gospel was preached in light rain, some even stood with their plastic chairs over their heads. Response for the decision booklets is often almost overwhelming. Then they were invited to a nearby church by the pastor. He had planted the church a few years ago after a similar open-air film meeting with our evangelists. People shook our hands as we left and thanked us so much for coming.



## Australia



Merv Jensen of our Victorian branch has developed a very effective ministry in senior citizens homes. Using a variety of media including interactive games, thought-provoking PowerPoint presentations, and interesting messages, Merv engages the audience appropriately. But the favourite amongst the oldies is Merv’s piano accordion. The old folks love to sing some of the old hymns and then sit fascinated as the stories behind some of those hymns are explained... John Newton’s “Amazing Grace,” Horatio Spafford’s “It Is Well With My Soul,” etc. Pray that some of these folks in the latter years of their earthly lives will come to know the One who gives eternal life.

*... preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*

2 Timothy 4:2 (ESV)

## Robert Siakimotu in Rwanda



Many of us are aware, perhaps through the movie “Hotel Rwanda,” of the sad and tragic events of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. I was deeply moved by what happened at that time. I have had the privilege of working alongside my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ during the ‘Mission Africa’ training and outreaches in the city of Rubavu and Rusizi and Kigali and Musanze. It has been a tremendous opportunity to equip evangelists and pastors at the School of Evangelism and to work alongside the same leaders and team members preaching the Gospel in the open-air meetings and reaching the children with the message of hope in Jesus Christ. Hundreds of adults and children gather as the Gospel is proclaimed through music, dance, and through personal testimonies but mainly through preaching. In some meetings, people even stood in the rain and listened attentively. At every invitation, many responded and were counselled by Christians from different churches working together in unity. The dear brother in Christ who was my interpreter said to me after an open-air meeting one day, “It is a blessing to see the people of Rwanda rejoicing again.” Another church leader who survived the genocide said to me after a children’s outreach, “The hope for these children and for the whole of Rwanda is Jesus Christ.”



## Latvia



**S**tuart Burnside, Director of OAC Latvia, writes, “My personal focus is on building people not building the organization. Sometimes the two are linked, for example: I have been investing in two Latvians in their late twenties (Martins and Inese). They have now become full time in the ministry of OAC and are themselves now building other people. At other times, putting the person first means releasing them from our organization to be a blessing to others. For example:

- Marika was on the first team we started and has since gone on to train as a full-time officer in the Salvation Army in Latvia.
- Elena was on our school team and is now in Bible College.
- Laura was the leader of one of our teams based in the capital, Riga, and she is now in full-time ministry, currently in the U.K.

I will continue to prioritize building people, even if it means that the organization is sometimes a little messy!”

## Greece



**D**an Truitt took an informal survey in a shopping district near his home and found that about four stores per block were shuttered. He finally figured out what to do with them — open-airs without a sketchboard. Not having to pack a sketchboard saves a lot of trouble, especially when you’re using a bicycle as transportation. The paper is taped to an empty store window, and when the message is done, it stays there for a few days.

## Norway



**W**e are often invited by churches to teach using creative aids such as Gospel object lessons, balloon modeling and sketchboards. We often show the EvangeCube. It’s a very useful tool to keep the attention while proclaiming the Gospel on the streets. One of our evangelists showed the EvangeCube to a pastor at a street meeting.

The pastor got so excited about this way of sharing the Gospel, that he ordered 30 EvangeCubes. He wanted to teach the method to a group of Filipinos in his church. They were in Norway for a short-term mission, and now they have taken them back to the Philippines. We want to inspire Christians to share the Gospel not just in Norway or the Philippines but all over the world, because Jesus has commanded us to share the Good News to everybody on this planet. “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1.8

## Albania



**O**ur work has grown tremendously in Albania. We have a number of young, committed staff, as well as experienced leadership. Some wonderful ministry opportunities have been developed to go alongside the traditional work. These include city festival family outreaches and sports camps. Many hundreds of people attend the festivals, both younger and older. The sports camps attract young people who may not hear the Gospel in normal circumstances. The photo in the snowfields puts a new meaning to the term ‘snowboarding’!

## Austria



**U**sing visual aids helps tremendously to communicate the Gospel in fresh ways in a country where most people only know nominal Christianity. Many find church boring and irrelevant. Austria’s National Director, Stefan, always enjoys involving the crowd which helps to create a friendly atmosphere. People are engaged when they are entertained. This gives great opportunities to reach them on a heart level. Let us pray that some of them will put their trust in Christ alone and will become committed followers of Him.

## Denmark



**E**very year at Pentecost, we do a big outreach at a flower and amusement park. The day starts with a church service in one of the restaurants with about 500 people. A number of people who usually don’t go to their local church do go to this service. Torben, our Denmark National Director, gave a very good and simple Gospel message which came across well, as he used some unusual visual aids. In the afternoon, we had Gospel concerts with adult and children’s choirs. Then we used Gospel object lessons, balloons, sketchboards and puppets at different places in the park. All in all, we had the opportunity to speak to quite a number of people who don’t know Christ.

## France



One of the sites that Peter Kent's church in Paris uses for open-air is the famous Place de La Bastille. Peter Kennelly, OAC GB Director, joins us once a month. After sketch-board messages and conversations with non-Christians, we walk across to the Bastille Opera House. There is a 40-minute interval during Opera performances. The public sits on the steps or crowds the pavement during this time. We walk right into the middle of this crowd of 300 people and sing Gospel songs, giving a clear Christian message. The songs are well received and some people take tracts with our church address and phone number. No one has yet paid us to shut up!

## Russia



Misha Tsvirinko, our OAC Russia Director and evangelist, reports that he has traveled with a team to the far north of Russia, beyond the polar belt, to visit and assist local missionaries in far away prisons. They drove many thousands of kilometers, visited 51 prisons, including both men's and women's, with over 4000 prisoners attending the meetings. Some came to faith in Christ. One man named Grisha, a policeman before he was arrested, told them after their visit that he would start reading the Bible and searching for the Lord with all his heart. Testimonies like this were heard in almost every prison where they proclaimed the Gospel. At the end of the mission, the 15-year-old OAC van broke down and now needs to be replaced.

## Romania



In Romania, there is much strategic work with children. In Alba Iulia, there are weekly clubs for children of various ages. This year, they celebrated 10 years of the clubs. Many have testified of coming to know the Lord and growing in their faith. Some have become leaders now sharing their faith with others. Every year they hold three one-week summer camps in the mountains near Cluj, where it is cooler than in the city. This year the theme was "Stay calm; you are not alone" based on the life of Elijah. A special program on 'Childs Day' was a real blessing as evangelists Traian and Lidia Opruta and Delia shared with a large group.

## Germany/Hungary



The ethnic minority of the Roma, who in the English-speaking world are often called gypsies, can be found in nearly every European country. Mainly in the eastern part of Central Europe and in South-east Europe, they are literally living on the edge of society. Quite often they are defamed, discriminated against, and sometimes pursued for persecution. For many years, workers of OAC Germany have been involved in the Roma mission in Hungary.

In Jánoshalma, some Roma people got saved during this last year. Roma missionary, József Oláh, is caring for these young Christians and is planting home churches in their colonies.



## Great Britain



vegetables with a barrow. He had a license to do this and was not friendly towards us; he saw us as competition for customers! We often received threatening behaviour and verbal abuse, until one night he came up to us with a smile and said in cockney rhyming slang, "I've got God in my jam tart" which means he has got God in his heart!

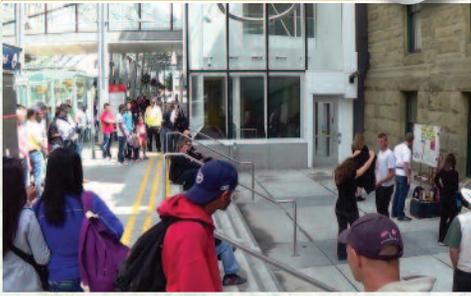
## Ukraine



At the center plaza of downtown Kiev, OAC received special permission to preach the Gospel. In this strategic spot, people from all over Ukraine and many parts of the world were reached. Parks were another place we preached, where children gathered with parents as a Bible story was presented. In other parks with only adults, a slow stream of seekers responded for our decision booklets after the message. Recently one said, "I was in a church, but went away, and God has found me here."



## Canada



The Calgary OAC street team is reaching out to the lost all year, on Thursdays and Saturdays, preaching the Good News of Christ Jesus our Lord. We are blessed with a strong volunteer team which often numbers between 6 and 16 workers. During the summer, we usually see more people coming to the Lord, as has been the case this year. In the late spring and early summer, we have seen 10 people pray to receive Christ as Saviour. One man came to the Lord at the end of the meeting pictured, and he came to church the next day with some of our team members who continue to see him. The 10 who have responded are all immigrants or under 20 years old, which is typical. We are thankful that people from all over the world come to Alberta to find work but also find the Lord.

## United States



On the campus of Michigan State University after the preaching one day, OAC staff man, Brian Harmon, reports that his friend turned to the person next to him and asked what he thought about the message. The student replied, "I need a relationship with Jesus Christ." This student (York) was from China and has been here four months. Please pray for these and many others who hear the Word of God in these campus meetings. We certainly can't initiate faith, but we can depend upon God, proclaim truth, and trust Him for the fruit. As Romans 10:17 teaches us, "faith comes from hearing...the Word of Christ."

OAC/USA is trusting the Lord to use this ministry to impact 25 cities in America with the Gospel through open-air evangelism and other ministry by strategic establishment of branch ministries by the year 2025.

## Jamaica



The word "go" still means "to go"! Last year was a glorious year as we reached approximately 115,000 persons with the Gospel. This year, we have shared the Good News with over 34,000 persons and have seen over 5,000 decisions for Christ. My heart fills with joy and my mind with blessed memories as I meet adults who remember me coming to their school devotions when they were children. One such story: A mother of two shared how her children had come home from school, excitedly telling her about the man who had come to devotions, playing music and painting on a board. She told them that he was Uncle Keith, and that he had come to her school when she was their age. Well, she had a hard time convincing them that it was the same person since they were sure their Mom was sooo old! It just couldn't be the same Uncle Keith!



## Bahamas



While presenting the Good News to residents of children's homes, prisons and especially schools, hundreds of youth responded to God's message. At a school on Andros, the largest of our 700 islands, a male student, after receiving Christ along with 10 others, compelled us to stay longer to answer questions on "how to live purely."

When a male teacher, who mentors boys, heard our simple and clear message presented to his class on the sketchboard, he raised his hand and prayed along with 10 students to receive Jesus. He then loudly asked about the process again on how to be born again. Many teachers express appreciation for this uncomplicated method.

## Switzerland/Wyoming US Natives



It's winter in Wyoming on the Wind River Indian Reservation where Kurt and Susanne Schaffli (on loan from OAC Switzerland) serve the Arapaho and Shoshoni youth. Even though the temperature may be below zero, in the afternoon, the sun will shine for a few hours, enabling them to hold small open-air when the children come home from school or in the city park. They also teach the Bible in prisons and taught students at a Bible school how to share the Gospel with visual aids. In the picture, Kurt is using ropes and balloons. Pray for the salvation message to be understood and hearts to be changed.



## News Snippets

**Belgium:** Ben maintains regular visits to ships and prisons. A strategic and worthwhile ministry!

**Italy:** Michela has a wonderful evangelistic TV ministry. See Facebook: Pray for the Boot and Michela. (Italy is shaped like a boot!)

**Mexico:** An international flavor has been happening with the International Conference held in Guadalajara. Since then our Director, Misael Hernandez, accompanied USA Evangelist-at-

large, Paul Adams, as interpreter on trips to a number of Central American countries including Guatemala and Costa Rica.

**New Zealand:** Our second oldest OAC nation maintains a vital ministry in a number of cities and also has an active interest in several Polynesian islands.

**Spain:** Our OAC International web master, Chris Mathieson, has been busy with a range of items. See the article: "Stay in Touch: Around the Globe, Around the Clock!" on page 6.

## Brazil



**B**razil is a country in spiritual harvest with many outreach opportunities for OAC staff. The public schools have been a tremendous mission field. We have total freedom to preach the Good News of salvation to the students. After one meeting, a student went to the teacher and gave her two rocks of crack (cocaine) and said that he understood that God didn't want for him to do it. The Director of this school said to our staff: "All should hear this message..." Praise Him! We are rejoicing, too, because in recent days, a couple that God brought into this ministry is going to Bolivia to start a new OAC National Branch there! This is a big step for them and OAC Brazil, and we are trusting the Lord to guide and use them in this harvest field on our border.

## Ecuador



**W**e praise God for His faithfulness! The Lord is opening great opportunities to present the Gospel to the military. Recently, we preached to a military group of the United Nations (Blue Helmets). The group pictured above is going to Haiti on a peacekeeping mission and to rescue children suffering sexual abuse. The Lord allowed us to preach the Gospel of peace to these peacemakers. They invited us to come back to preach later in the year to the next group. Opportunities will also be taken in a military base of Army Engineers and Army Aviation staff. The Lord has been faithful!

[www.oaci.org](http://www.oaci.org)

## Paraguay



**O**AC Paraguay Director, Felipe Diaz, has had some interesting opportunities with Catholic groups... "On one occasion, despite being sick with a severely sore throat, I was asked to preach. They brought their priest and did their celebration. Then, as I was about to start with the sketchboard message, a strong wind blew up from nowhere and blew it over, spilling the paint in the process. The wind was the work of the devil, as there had been no wind before and none after. Thank God, I had some spare paint! I could feel the devil's oppression, but the Holy Spirit gave me the strength to preach with authority. I was amazed on making the appeal that 80% of the people indicated a decision to follow Christ! The owner of the house, Saturnina, came forward to thank me and said that she had goose pimples during the message. Praise the Lord!" On another occasion, Felipe preached at a Catholic funeral and again saw much response. Death can bring life!

## New Nations!

**O**AC is 121 years old but is still growing! This year sees the beginning of a new Branch in **Bolivia**, opened by OAC Brazil. Please pray for Robson and Cristhiane Silva who are going from Brazil to live in the largest city, Santa Cruz.



Also in the latter part of this year, **OAC Philippines** will be established. Please pray for Ophir and Frances Odal who will be based in Antipolo City, part of Metro Manila.



## Stay in Touch... Around the Globe Around the Clock

**A**long with this *UPDATE*, there are new ways we can focus on what the Lord is doing through OACI around the world.

**Website:** [www.oaci.org](http://www.oaci.org) Our website gets about 5,000 visitors each month and offers information about who we are, what we do, and where we work. There are links to all of our national websites which communicate in local languages to keep supporters informed.

**Social media:** OACI is active on Facebook. Our website gives the big picture and Facebook keeps you updated with news and photos from our national and local branches. It is an ideal way to get to know what is going on so that you can pray meaningfully, get involved in a local outreach, or even see videos of what evangelists are doing on the street.

If you are interested in supporting OACI (or a local branch) with technical skills, let your local team know. We can all use some regular or occasional help!

## Is God Calling You?

**I**s God calling you to help OACI somewhere, somehow? OACI branches are always needing more **prayer and support partners**, and/or local outreach **volunteer workers**. We also need **staff evangelists**. Short-term mission **teams** from churches or school groups are encouraged to come for a week or two of ministry in the OAC national or international branch of your choice. These times of outreach provide tremendous evangelistic experience for those who participate.

If the Lord is so prompting you in any of these ways, contact our International President (contact info on the front page), who will then redirect you to the appropriate branch.