~Other Speakers M-R: Revival Articles:

4. Mid-twentieth Century
1949 - Hebrides Islands, Scotland (Duncan Campbell)
1951 - Monday 4 June - City Bell, Argentina (Ed Miller)
1965 - Sunday 26 September - Soe, Timor (Mel Tari)
1970 - Tuesday 3 February - Wilmore, Kentucky (Asbury College)
1970 - July-August - Solomon Islands (Muri Thompson)
1971 - Wednesday 13 October - Saskatoon, Canada (Bill McCleod)
1973 - September - Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Todd Burke)
1973 - Sunday 16 September - Enga District, Papua New Guinea

1949

Hebrides Islands, Scotland (Duncan Campbell)

Following the trauma of World War II, spiritual life was at a low ebb in the Scottish Hebrides. By 1949 Peggy and Christine Smith (84 and 82) had prayed constantly for revival in their cottage near Barvas village on the Isle of Lewis, the largest of the Hebrides Islands in the bleak north west of Scotland. God showed Peggy in a dream that revival was coming. Months later, early one winter’s morning as the sisters were praying, God gave them an unshakeable conviction that revival was near.

Peggy asked her minister James Murray Mackay to call the church leaders to prayer. Three nights a week the leaders prayed together for months. One night, having begun to pray at 10 p.m., a young deacon from the Free Church read Psalm 24 and challenged everyone to be clean before God. As they waited on God his awesome presence swept over them in the barn at 4 a.m.

Mackay invited Duncan Campbell to come and lead meetings. Within two weeks he came. God had intervened and changed Duncan's plans and commitments. At the close of his first meeting in the Presbyterian church in Barvas the travel weary preacher was invited to join an all night prayer meeting! Thirty people gathered for prayer in a nearby cottage. Duncan Campbell described it:

'God was beginning to move, the heavens were opening, we were there on our faces before God. Three o’clock in the morning came, and GOD SWEPT IN. About a dozen men and women lay prostrate on the floor, speechless. Something had happened; we knew that the forces of darkness were going to be driven back, and men were going to be delivered. We left the cottage at 3 am to discover men and women seeking God. I walked along a country road, and found three men on their faces, crying to God for mercy. There was a light in every home, no one seemed to think of sleep (Whittaker 1984:159).

When Duncan and his friends arrived at the church that morning it was already crowded. People had gathered from all over the island, some coming in buses and vans. No one discovered who told them to come. God led them. Large numbers were converted as God’s Spirit convicted multitudes of sin, many lying prostrate, many weeping. After that amazing day in the church, Duncan pronounced the benediction, but then a young man began to pray aloud. He prayed for 45 minutes. Again the church filled with people repenting and the service continued till 4 am the next morning before Duncan could pronounce the benediction again.

'Even then he was unable to go home to bed. As he was leaving the church a messenger told him, "Mr. Campbell, people are gathered at the police station, from the other end of the parish; they are in great spiritual distress. Can anyone here come along and pray with them?"

Campbell went and what a sight met him. Under the still starlit sky he found men and women on the road, others by the side of a cottage, and some behind a peat stack all crying to God for mercy. The revival had
'That went on for five weeks with services from early morning until late at night or into the early hours of the morning. Then it spread to the neighbouring parishes. What had happened in Barvas was repeated over and over again. Duncan Campbell said that a feature of the revival was the overwhelming sense of the presence of God. His sacred presence was everywhere' (Whittaker 1984:160).

That move of God in answer to prevailing prayer continued in the area into the fifties and peaked again on the previously resistant island of North Uist in 1957. Meetings were again crowded and night after night people cried out to God for salvation.

1951

Monday 4 June - City Bell, Argentina (Ed Miller)

A young man, Alexander, and his band of rebels sat in the front row of a revival meeting in Buenos Aires aiming to disrupt it. God convicted him and he repented. His gang began to leave but fell under the Spirit on the way out. All were converted. Two of them later went to Bible School.

Ed Miller taught at the Bible Training Institute in the little town of City Bell, just outside Buenos Aires. In June he was led to cancel lectures so the whole Bible School could pray every day. He announced this on the first Sunday in June.

Alexander, the former rebel, 'a teenager of Polish descent, was still in prayer long after midnight when he sensed a strange feeling of something pressing down upon him, an intense great light surrounding him and a heavenly being enfolding him. The boy was terrified and fled back to the Institute.

'The heavenly visitor entered the Institute with him, and in a few moments all the students were awake with the fear of God upon them. They began to cry out in repentance as God by his Spirit dealt with them. The next day the Spirit of God came again upon Alexander as he was given prophecies of God's moving in far off countries. The following day Alexander again saw the Lord in the Spirit, but this time he began to speak slowly and distinctly the words he heard from the angel of God. No one could understand what he was saying, however, until another lad named Celsio (with even less education than Alexander), overcame with the Spirit of God markedly upon him, began to interpret. These communications (written because he choked up when he tried to talk) were a challenge from God to pray and indeed the Institute became a centre of prayer till the vacation time, when teams went out to preach the kingdom. It was the beginning of new stirrings of the Spirit across the land' (Pytches 1989:49 51).

The Bible Institute continued in prayer for four months, 8 10 hours a day, with constant weeping. Bricks became saturated with tears. One student prayed against a plaster wall daily, weeping. After six hours his tear stains reached floor. After eight hours his tears began to form a puddle on floor.

Two students went to a town, wept and prayed for three to four weeks. Then the Holy Spirit led them to hold tent meetings which filled the tent. The Lord moved on the crowds powerfully.

Prophecies given to the Bible School told of God filling the largest auditoriums and stadiums. That happened within three years with the visit of Tommy Hicks. Crowds of 25,000, then 180,000 gathered at his meetings.

Tommy Hicks was conducting a series of meetings in California in 1952 when God showed him a vision. While he was praying he saw a map of South America covered with a vast field of golden wheat ripe for harvesting. The wheat turned into human beings calling him to come and help them.

He wrote in his Bible a prophecy he received about going by air to that land before two summers passed. Three months later, after an evangelistic crusade, a pastor's wife in California gave that same prophecy to him that he had written down. He was invited to Argentina in 1954 and had enough money to buy a one way air ticket to Buenos Aires.

On his way there after meetings in Chile, the word Peron came to his mind. He asked the air stewardess if she knew what it meant. She told him Peron was the President of Argentina. After he made an appointment with the
1950 - 1970

Minister of Religion, wanting to see the President, he prayed for the Minister’s secretary who was limping. He was healed. So the Minister made an appointment for Hicks to see the President. Through prayer the President was healed of an ugly eczema and gave Hicks the use of a stadium and free access to the state radio and press. The crusade was a spiritual breakthrough and led to a period of very rapid church growth in Argentina.

1965

Sunday 26 September - Soe, Timor (Mel Tari)

A rebellious young man had received a vision of the Lord who commanded him to repent, burn his fetishes, and confess his sins in church in Soe, Timor. He did. He challenged others to do the same. Hundreds did. He chose 23 young people who formed an evangelistic team, Team 1. They gave themselves full time to visiting churches and villages and saw thousands converted with multitudes healed and delivered. In one town alone they saw 9,000 people converted in two weeks.

Another young man, Mel Tari witnessed this visitation of God and later became part of Team 42. He attended the Reformed Church in Soe, a mountain town of about 5,000 people, when the revival broke out there on Sunday 26 September 1965. That night, as at Pentecost, people heard the sound of a tornado wind and flames on the church building prompted police to set off the fire alarm to summon the volunteer fire fighters. Many were converted that night, many filled with the Spirit including speaking in tongues, including English. By midnight teams of lay people had been organised to begin spreading the gospel the next day. Eventually, about 90 evangelistic teams were formed which functioned powerfully with spiritual gifts. Healings and evangelism increased dramatically. Specific directions from the Lord led the teams into powerful ministry with thousands becoming Christians. They saw many healings, miracles such as water being turned to non alcoholic wine for communion, some instantaneous healings, deliverance from witchcraft and demonic powers, and some people raised from death through prayer.

1970

Tuesday 3 February - Asbury College, Wilmore, Kentucky

A revival broke out in Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky, on Tuesday 3 February 1970. The regular morning chapel commencing at 10 o’clock saw God move on the students in such a way that many came weeping to the front to kneel in repentance, others gave testimonies including confession of sin, and all this was mixed with spontaneous singing. Lectures were cancelled for the day as the auditorium filled with over 1,000 people. Few left for meals. By midnight over 500 still remained praying and worshipping. Several hundred committed their lives to Christ that day. By 6 a.m. next morning 75 students were still praying in the hall, and through the Wednesday it filled again as all lectures were again cancelled for the day. The time was filled with praying, singing, confessions and testimonies.

As they continued in prayer that week many students felt called to share what was happening with other colleges and churches. Invitations were coming from around the country as news of the revival spread. So teams went out from the next weekend to tell the story and give their testimonies. Almost half the student body of 1000 was involved in the teams witnessing about the revival. In the first week after the revival began teams of students visited 16 states by invitation and saw several thousand conversions through their witnessing. After six weeks over 1,000 teams had gone from the college to witness, some of these into Latin America with finance provided by the home churches of the students. In addition, the neighbouring Theological Seminary sent out several hundred teams of their students who had also been caught up in this revival.

Those remaining at the college prayed for the teams and gladly heard their reports on their return. The Holy Spirit did similar things wherever they went. So that revival spread. The college remained a centre of the revival with meetings continuing at night and weekends there along with spontaneous prayer groups meeting every day. Hundreds of people kept coming to the college to see this revival and participate in it. They took reports and their own testimonies of changed lives back to their churches or colleges so sharing in the spread of the revival.

Revival also spread among the hippie drop-outs in the early seventies. Thousands were converted in mass rallies on he beaches and in halls. They developed their own Jesus People magazines, music and evangelism.
1970

July-August - Solomon Islands (Muri Thompson)

Muri Thompson, a Maori evangelist from New Zealand, visited the Solomons in July and August 1970 where the church had already experienced significant renewal and was praying for revival. Many of these Christians were former warriors and cannibals gradually won to Christ in spite of initial hostility and the martyrdom of early missionaires and indigenous evangelists.

Beginning at Honiara, the capital, Muri spent two months visiting churches and centres on the islands. Initially the national leaders and missionaires experienced deep conviction and repentance, publicly acknowledging their wrong attitudes. It was very humbling. A new unity and harmony transformed their relationships, and little things which destroyed that unity were openly confessed with forgiveness sought and given.

Then in the last two weeks of these meetings the Holy Spirit moved even more powerfully in the meetings with more deep repentance and weeping, sometimes even before the visiting team arrived. At one meeting the Spirit of God came upon everyone after the message in a time of silent prayer when the sound of a gale came above the gathering of 2000 people.

Multitudes were broken, melted and cleansed, including people who had been strongly opposed to the Lord. Weeping turned to joyful singing. Everywhere people were talking about what the Lord had done to them. Many received healings and deliverance from bondage to evil spirits. Marriages were restored and young rebels transformed.

Everywhere people were praying together every day. They had a new hunger for God's Word. People were sensitive to the Spirit and wanted to be transparently honest and open with God and one another.

Teams from these areas visited other islands, and the revival caught fire there also. Eventually pastors from the Solomons were visiting other Pacific countries and seeing similar moves of God there also.

1971

Wednesday 13 October - Saskatoon, Canada (Bill McCleod)

Bill McCleod invited the twin evangelists Ralph and Lou Sutera to speak at his church in Saskatoon. Revival broke out with their visit which began on Wednesday 13 October 1971. By the weekend an amazing spirit gripped the people. Many confessed their sins publicly. The first to do so were the twelve counsellors chosen to pray with inquirers. Numbers grew rapidly till the meetings had to be moved to a larger church building and then to the Civic Auditorium seating 2000.

The meetings lasted many hours. People did not want to leave. Some stayed on for a later meeting called the Afterglow. Here people received prayer and counsel from the group as they continued to worship God and pray together. Humble confession of sin and reconciliations were common. Many were converted.

Taxi drivers became amazed that people were getting cabs home from church late into the night or early into the morning. Others were calling for taxis to take them to church late into the night as they were convicted by the Lord. Young people featured prominently. Almost half those converted were young. They gave testimonies of lives that had been cleaned up by God and how relationships with their families were restored. The atmosphere in schools and colleges changed from rebellion and cheating to co-operation with many Bible study and prayer groups forming in the schools and universities.

Criminals were also confessing their sins and giving themselves up to the police. Restitution was common. People paid long overdue bills. Some businesses opened new accounts to account for the conscience money being paid to them. Those who cheated at restaurants or hotels returned to pay their full bill. Stolen goods were returned.

Christians found a new radical honesty in their lives. Pride and jealousies were confessed and transformed into humility and love. As people prayed for one another with new tenderness and compassion many experienced
healings and deliverance.

Not all welcomed the revival. Some churches remained untouched by it or hostile to it. This seems common to all revivals.

1973

September - Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Todd Burke)

In September 1973 Todd Burke arrived in Cambodia on a one week visitor’s visa. Just 23 years old, he felt a strong call from God to minister there, the only charismatic missionary in the country. Beginning with two English classes a day, conducted through an interpreter, he taught from the Good News Bible. Those interested in knowing more about Jesus stayed after class and he saw daily conversions and people filled with the Spirit and healed. Revival broke out in the war torn capital of Phnom Penh and rapidly spread to surrounding areas.

During that September Todd’s wife DeAnn joined him, they received permission to stay in the country, and mounted a three day crusade in a stadium where thousands attended and hundreds were saved and healed supernaturally. A powerful church spread through a network of small house churches. Todd met with the leaders of these groups at early morning prayer meetings every day at 6 am. Most pastors were voluntary workers holding normal jobs. Some cycled in from the country and returned for work each morning. Healings, miracles and deliverance from demonic powers were regular events, attracting new converts who in turn were filled with the power of the Spirit and soon began witnessing and praying for others.

When the country fell to the communists in 1975 the Burkes had to leave. They left behind an amazing church anointed by the power of God before it was buried by going underground to survive.

Sunday 16 September - Enga District, Papua New Guinea

Prayer meetings began among pastors, missionaries and Bible College students in the Baptist mission area among Engas of the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea in the early 1970s owing to the low spiritual state in the churches. This prayer movement spread to the villages. In some villages people agreed to pray together everyday until God sent new life to the church.

During September 1973 pastors from the Solomon Islands and Enga students who were studying at the Christian Leaders Training College visited the Enga churches. Revival broke out in many villages on Sunday 16 September. Many hundreds of people, deeply convicted of sin, repented and were reconciled to God and others with great joy.

Pastors in one area held a retreat from Monday to Wednesday in a forest which previously had been sacred for animistic spirit worship. Others joined the pastors there. Healings included a lame man able to walk, a deaf mute to spoke and heard, and a mentally deranged girl was restored.

Normal work stopped as people in their thousands hurried to special meetings. Prayer groups met daily, morning and evening. In the following months thousands of Christians were restored and thousands of pagans converted. The church grew in size and maturity.

This was followed in the eighties by tough times. Tribal conflict, destruction and bloodshed erupted. Revival often precedes hard times.