

Any young people are very welcome to contribute to the **next issue** of the *Interdependent*: articles, photos, drawings, jokes or any other items would be good. If you have anything that you would like to appear, please send it to me at juliangb@ntlworld.com or 109 Holmes Avenue, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 7LF. Emails are preferred to written items, to save me having to type it all in!

Julian

"He who bruises his fingers whilst drumming on a lectern is a true inspiration to music"

Rick Brewin
2003

Next year's YAG Social is going to be held in Orpington, Kent, during the February half term. Orpington is very near to London, so there will be plenty of things to do, as well as good access from around the country. Booking forms will be sent out nearer the time to all AIF young people of ages 15+. Please help by returning the form promptly if you want to come (and who wouldn't)!

George (YAG Sec)

Don't forget the YAG website — www.ifyag.org.uk! Interdep' back issues, news snippets, our massive photo archive and other info is all available at your leisure! Go online for updates on all the notes on this page. Also, check out the new Interchurch Families Forum at www.ifyag.org.uk/forum. **Ric**

Soul Survivor in London, Summer 2004

Soul Survivor supports the efforts made by London's churches to serve and witness to the people of Greater London, by bringing thousands of young people to 12 days of co-ordinated activity established in partnership with local churches, from 26 July 2004 to 6 August 2004.

It will run as two 5 day missions, Week A (26-30 July) and Week B (02-06 August), sandwiching a SOUL IN THE CITY weekend, 31 July-01 August. Accommodation will be in a number of 'tent cities' within Local Centres. In the mornings delegates will have times for worship, teaching and ministry. In the afternoons and evenings they will go to designated projects, like reclaiming parkland from rubbish, or cleaning graffiti from a shopping parade, within their Local Centre. Evening celebrations will be open to contacts made during the afternoon projects.

George Walsh is trying to organise a group to go to Soul in the City / Soul Survivor 2004. If you are interested, then please contact George, dippydumping@yahoo.co.uk. The events are going to be very popular, so you need to register your interest as soon as possible, so that a group can be booked early. More information is on the Soul Survivor website at www.soulsurvivor.co.uk **George**



Editorial no.24

Hello, and welcome to the first edition of the *Interdependent* with me as co-editor. A lot has happened in the world of Interchurch youth since the last *Interdependent*, I am sure everyone else like me enjoyed both the Swanwick and Rome conferences (If you weren't there then you won't have done!) - There are articles to tell you what happened if you can't remember...

Plus there is an article about the Considering Confirmation Weekend, which was run for the 11-17 age range, looking at confirmation without the barriers of a specific denomination. The YAG social 2003, which is halfway point in the year for YAG to remember each other's names, is in as well.

Of course the biggest change this year in the 'youth of AIF' has been the loss of Bev as the Youth Officer, who has now moved on. I asked Bev a few questions about being Youth Officer and what she's doing now, so look out for that as well. We hope her career in the ministry is a successful one.

Enjoy reading!

Julian Granger-Bevan
juliangb@ntlworld.com

Co-ed number 2 here! Firstly I'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue; I think it's one of the best ever! I hope we've done our predecessors Sarah and Peter proud.

Lastly, I'd like to mention that I really enjoyed putting this issue together, I hope less so than you enjoy reading it (if you see what I mean).

Ric Lander
ric.lander@btopenworld.com

Beyond YAG: Rev. Bev Hollins

Julian Granger-Bevan

I asked (the now Reverend) Bev Hollins a few questions about what she did as Youth Officer, and what she is doing now.

-How long have you been YO for?

I started the paid job in October 1997, but I have been involved with the youth group since the Birmingham Conference, where I was the networking co-ordinator.

-Roughly how many young people have you seen pass through your sessions in that time?

(Long err!) Probably about 45-50, because there were the oldest people like the Ellen and Sarah Bards who have now moved on and the younger people like the Rachel Dochertys and the Hannah Woolmers who are just entering the YAG age range.

-Have you met many important people through your job in AIF?

Yes, I was the AIF youth representative on the enabling group of CTE, and a couple of times of CTBI. I got to know the now Cardinal Cormac quite well, when he was still bishop of Arundel and Brighton, as well as meeting George Carey and the Free Church Moderator, and most of the other presidents of AIF.

-What has been your most memorable experience in the YO job?

The Confirmation Weekends (two of them), the YAG Socials especially sleeping on a hard floor in a scout hut in London, and Peter Vernon eating too much pizza. (continued overleaf)

My ecumenical experience of L'Arche

Laura Finch

On September 10th 2002 I committed myself for 9 months to the L'Arche community in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Before doing so I knew little about the philosophies of L'Arche and about its Christian message. I expected much of it to be Roman Catholic as this is where its roots lie.

On my first Sunday in L'Arche I was interested to see what would happen. Having been brought up in two different Christian churches I was not too worried about where I would be going or where I would be asked to go. We went to the Anglican Church. It was a great little church with a real family atmosphere and our group was welcomed as though we were regular members. I was later to find out that

we weren't and that it was only traditionally the home of one of the ladies with a disability. I liked the church, the service and the minister and made a mental note that I would like to attend that church if I were given the opportunity. The next Sunday we all went to the local Catholic Church. I lived with a Catholic Sister and three of the other people with a disability were Catholic so I found out that this was the church I would be spending most of my Sundays in. This church was different but also very welcoming. It had a large congregation and there were many children. I enjoyed the worship here and found that celebrating mass in a different country helped me link with home a bit. Now I felt as if I was back in the same situation as at home. I liked both Anglican and Catholic churches and for different reasons I wanted to become a member of both! The seventh person in our house went to a third church, which was the United Church. He would get a lift every Sunday with a friend.

In the end I went mainly to the Catholic Church and was glad be-

cause for the first time I began to respect the Catholic Mass in a way I had not before. I had once thought the liturgy to be monotonous and just read out loud with not much passion. I can't really describe what it turned into for me but it was something a lot more meaningful than it had been and I really felt the need to go and celebrate the Eucharist. I think before going to L'Arche I only felt the need to worship and receiving communion was not quite so important. However, I also went to the Anglican Church with one of the ladies and I really enjoyed going there because it was a much more intimate service being a smaller church. I learnt that L'Arche encouraged each person to attend their own church and that people did. My friend, a German assistant even used to go to the German church in the city. And another Romanian friend would attend the Orthodox Church.

The celebrations that were held in L'Arche were ecumenical and everyone was welcome. We would have community prayer nights and prayers in our homes every evening. I never

Beyond YAG: Rev. Bev Hollins (continued)

-What was the best moment of the job?

The acts of worship led by the young people, such as the night prayers at Swanwick, where they had a chance to speak by themselves.

-Are you glad you took the job of YO, any regrets?

No, I'm very glad I took the job, I loved it. It was a great privilege to work with the young people.

-What are you doing now job-wise?

I am part of the ministry of 'Christ the Cornerstone' in Milton Keynes. On September the 28th, I was ordained as a deacon. This is a full time job, instead of part-time, which is a big difference. The church is a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP), so it combines some of the AIF principles as well.

-Which Denominations are represented in the LEP?

There are people who are Roman Catholics, Church of England, URC, Methodist and Baptist.

-Is the LEP better than a 'normal' church?

Yes, it lives out the vision of AIF, and is what Jesus prayed for. It is also a better use of church resources, although it needs harder work.

-What will your job involve?

I am a Team Minister (or what the Anglican Church calls a Curate), so I will be leading worships, preaching and doing pastoral jobs. It will also include children's and youth work, including bits on Confirmation.

-Do you have any big career hopes (Such as Archbishop of Canterbury!)?

No, I just want to go where God wants me to, so I have no real ambitions. What God does is sometimes strange at first, but works in the end.

-What do you do now in the AIF role of 'Youth Chaplain'?

It was a self-invented role, because I didn't really want to leave YAG. It is basically a pastoral role, where I am a friend to YAG and I can link YAG to Christian Unity through confirmation. I am available to YAG as a shoulder to lean on, or to help with worship. I can also act as a bridge to the adults.

-How can the young people of AIF support you in what you are doing now?

By praying for me and keeping in touch.

Bev Hollins September 2003

Considering Confirmation?

Rachel Docherty

The Confirmation Weekend was designed for young people considering confirmation. There were three mentors there, Bev Hollins, Martin Reardon and Mgr. Chris Lightbound. The weekend was split up into sessions with a different topic to do with confirmation for each. Helena Mayles also joined the group to share with them her own experience of confirmation.

During the course of the weekend the whole group got to ask questions and then have them answered. The aim of the weekend was to eventually help the young people try to make a decision about confirmation. Whether they wanted to be confirmed, affirmed or nothing at all. I

found it very useful and informative and many of my questions were answered. I now know that confirmation in to one church is not the only option for people who belong to two different churches. There is always the possibility of affirmation and having both your priests give you a blessing.

It was a very relaxed and helpful weekend. Although there were a lot of sessions there was also free time during the day and the day would end with the evening being free to be able to relax with your new found friends!

The weekend ended with a very quiet, small and personal service. Early on in the day everybody had written prayers on to different shaped and coloured paper leaves. During the service we hung these on to a branch offering our prayers up to God, while music played in the background.

Although at the moment I still haven't decided whether or not I want to be confirmed, I do feel that this weekend helped me in my journey to making a decision.

YAG Committee Update

There have been many changes to the YAG Committee, as the "older" generation of YAG have stepped down and the "younger" have stepped into their places.

The new committee members are: Helena Mayles (me!) as Chair, George Walsh as Secretary, Julia Docherty as main Committee Rep and Julian Granger-Bevan and Ric Lander as Interdep' Editors. A big thanks to Mel, Jane, Sarah and Mark for all their hard work. If you have any queries or thoughts regarding YAG please do not hesitate to e-mail me at physco45@hotmail.com,

Love and prayers,
Helena xx



"Reformed Baptist Church of God."

"Me too! Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1879, or Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915?"

"Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915!"

To which I said, "Die, heretic scum!" and pushed him off!

(thanks to John Nugent)



Swanwick 2003

Martin Ash reports (continued)

However, judging from the number of people through the whole conference who knew my name that I didn't know (have the badges gone out of fashion?), most people were awake by the time Bev interviewed Laura, the Mayles and myself on confirmation. Discussion groups that followed wandered off subject spectacularly, but I certainly learnt a lot about other people's experiences. I think we concluded that the Catholic Church does everything too early...and we're looking for a kind of EU-type unity of the churches(!).



playing for the service we hadn't rehearsed for. This was very effective, as well, as an eye-opener (I don't know the Baptist Church at all); maybe I can look forward to a URC Eucharist in the next couple of years? "Social time" said the programme; at 1 a.m., Pete was still going strong at table tennis...

The next morning saw a lot of sleepy people at breakfast and quite a lot of noise in Catholic Mass, as usual. Then on to Matt Stuart's talk, officially labelled the highlight of the weekend. Actually, that was unnecessary as it was anyway. As always seems to happen with us, it was something of a race against the clock, but there were certainly many important things said - and what a relief to see a practical, down-to-earth approach to Christian living, I think everyone would agree. While other people spent their free afternoon hunting for giant draughts sets or trying to learn to play croquet, I attempted to prepare for two concert items, and then watched peo-

ple trying to learn to play croquet (I still do not understand it!). YAG AGM had an historic event - despite starting fifteen minutes late (Jane had difficulty getting rid of somebody else's baby) we finished five minutes EARLY! and were at the main AGM before we were called for. Due congratulations to the almost all-new Committee. At least this year we didn't walk in to the words 'education, education, education', which seemed a bit nightmarish last year. The Concert was the next big item. As well as the threat of Mark Powell playing hosepipes at Swanwick for the next nine years, we had two possible world's worst records: Stephen for a very erudite joke, and myself for blues singing. Moving swiftly on...

We were nearly all in the Plenary (exceptions shall remain unnamed). This was perhaps most notable for being in fact four successive discussions, none of which had enough time (sound familiar?). I didn't notice any sleepers this year, suggesting no one stayed up all Sunday night - maybe sense is taking over! The final Eucharist of the weekend featured everyone they could fit in, as normal, and as is traditional finished with the loudest even vaguely appropriate song the organisers could think of that hadn't been used before (even without any drums!). All of which sent us on our way home, heads full of a thousand different ideas - and unable to wait until February...

I was walking across a bridge one day, and I saw a man standing on the edge, about to jump off. I immediately ran over and said, "Stop! Don't do it!"

"Why shouldn't I?" he said.

I said, "Well, there's so much to live for!"

"Like what?"

"Well ... are you religious or atheist?"

"Religious."

"Me too! Are you Christian or Jewish?"

"Christian."

"Me too! Are you Catholic or Protestant?"

"Protestant."

"Me too! Are you Episcopalian or Baptist?"

"Baptist."

"Wow! Me too! Are you Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord?"

"Baptist Church of God."

"Me too! Are you Original Baptist Church of God, or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God?"

The YAG Social, Cardiff

Catherine Garsed

Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd February 2003, Cyncoed Methodist Church, Cardiff

On one dark evening in late Winter the beautiful city of Cardiff was invaded by one of the most powerful forces on Earth - YAG!

felt as if I would be treated differently and I was never scared to add my own ideas to the worship and liturgy. I think l'Arche is an excellent place for an 'interchurch child' to be and experience the unity between the Christian churches. I really enjoyed being part of a community and building up amazing relationships with those who I lived with. I could not have wished for a better GAP year in which to learn and grow. There were struggles and hard times but these were definitely outweighed by the good times.

Most people arrived towards late afternoon/early evening and once the majority of people had arrived we sat down for a delicious tea, cooked by (if my memory serves me correctly) Jane and Mel. A few late arrivals appeared after tea, much to the delight of everyone gathered. The final line-up was:

Melanie Lander, Peter Sheehan, Catherine Garsed, Philip Garsed, Peter Vernon, Richard Ash, Sarah Mayles, Helena Mayles, Jane Smith, Ric Lander, Jen Brewin, Georgina Walsh, Stephen Granger-Bevan and Bev Hollins.



After a fairly comfortable night (the church provided mats to sleep on) and a tasty (and in some cases HUGE breakfast *cough PETER cough*), also provided kindly by the church, we set off for Cardiff Bay. Once again the church was only too eager to help and 4 volunteers got up bright and early (8:30!!!) to drive us all down to the bay.



The bay has recently undergone major redevelopment, which is continuing, so there was a lot going on. We wandered around the bay briefly and had a couple of group photos, before head-

ing for the Light Ship. The 'Gulegong Light Ship 2000' is a mission to spread the light of Christ throughout the world. All of the workers onboard are voluntary and although the ship now lives in Cardiff Bay, the staff helps to run the Coffee Shop and keep the engines in order. We indulged in a quick coffee at the Coffee Shop on board then left after leaving a well-deserved donation for the tremendous work they do there.

From the Light Ship we wandered into the city centre, where spirits were running high, due to the Rugby League match, between Wales and England at the Millennium Stadium. We had a quick look round the shops, before heading back for Cyncoed - the lovely little Methodist church at which we were staying. Feeling a little disgruntled, due to a long wait for a bus in the cold, we soon cheered up again.

The church was quite modern and had a gym/sports hall, which proved very popular for skating in and for basketball.

That evening we held a YAG meeting, followed by some preparation for the service the following day. That night a few of the younger, possibly more foolish ones (yes I was one of them!) decided to stay up late and as a result ended up sleeping in the cold kitchen. However this was an advantage for certain people who spent the night eating, leaving no food for the morning!

The following morning a bunch of enthusiastic but weary YAG members took part in the morning worship at Cyncoed. Some of us contributed bidding prayers, while others offered readings. Bev prepared a children's address and the service, as a whole was very pleasant.

Overall the Cardiff Social was a fantastic weekend for everyone involved and was hugely enjoyable. As my first YAG activity I thoroughly enjoyed it and look forward to many more to come! A big thank you goes to Bev for the organisation and also to the community of Cyncoed, who provided us with electricity and use of the building for free and also gave transport and food. They welcomed us very generously and made our weekend enjoyable and successful.

Roma!

George Walsh

The Second World Gathering of Inter-church Families Thursday 24th - Monday 28th July 2003

In our first session of the 14+ group, we met Kathy the leader, the other people and played some icebreakers to learn everyone's names. There were about thirty of us, from four different countries - England, France, Austria and Canada using three different languages. The adult sessions had simultaneous translations but we didn't and before the session we were quite nervous about communicating with the others. Luckily Helene proved to be a wonderful translator and we all owe her several. After a break we had another session where we divided into our small groups led by Jen, Mark, Mel and Sarah. We soon discovered that school French doesn't quite prepare for theological discussion but we did our best. We had a quick tour of the site as well. After the session we practised the great YAG tradition - the human pyramid! This was followed by a conversation into the early hours and the discovery of my friend the espresso machine.

At some ungodly hour of the morning the alarm dragged me out of bed and I went down to breakfast. Still not quite awake I went down to the chapel for the first service. I'm not quite sure which language it was in, or which denomination was leading it, but the Communion was really nice because we sang Taize chants, that seemed to go across the language barriers. The next session started a little late, due to the service over-running and we had some discussion about life in an interchurch family in our small groups. After a break we had a

Bible study outside, first though we sang a couple of songs and then the reading was read in English, French and German before splitting into our groups to discuss the passage. After lunch we commandeered 8 cars to take us to the lake for a swim - it was a welcome break from the heat! The afternoon session was craft-, bead-work and tie-dye. I was mixing the dye and so I ended up with one red hand and one blue hand - it looked like I had some weird and wonderful disease. Then we started to plan for the Sunday evening service - we split into 4 groups, drama, dance, music and prayers. The music group had one problem; namely no guitar, drums or piano, but placing our trust in our singing voices we choose some songs. That evening we watched Oceans 11, courtesy of Ric.

Our first session of the morning was outside - in our groups we discussed Christian life and relationships with God which was pretty cool. After the break we had a Bible study and then



we went swimming again!!! It was really fun until somebody told me that the lake was actually in the crater of a dormant volcano and then I was completely freaked out. In the afternoon session we painted photo frames for our group photo, and then we started to set up for the prayer vigil. The vigil started at nine with a small Taize style service, and then I went to try and grab a couple of hours sleep - without much success! At 2 I was ready for my 'shift' (I'd like to say bright eyed and bushy tailed but...) The 4 prayer centres concentrated on faith, the world, family and friends and the Church. There was an incredible atmosphere and you could really feel God. A massive round of applause has to go to Laura for her careful planning and all-night marathon.

Sunday was outings day, you could either go to Casto Gandolfo, Rome, or both. Casto Gandolfo was very crowded and there was a massive crush to get into the courtyard for the Angelus. The Pope had been unable to give Inter-church Families a private audience but he did mention us and gave us a message in French.

When everyone got back from Rome we did some frantic last minute preparation for the service, which went very well. We opened with a rousing 'We Are Marching', followed by a brilliant multi-lingual drama, which I cannot hope to explain using mere words. Basically it said that although jam and bread and butter are very nice by themselves (I wasn't sure about the butter but Pete appeared to like it) together they are even better - and this is true for the churches.

(continued opposite)

Swanwick 2003

Interchurch Families National Conference, The Hayes Saturday 23th-Monday 25th August

Martin Ash Reports: Stephen Granger-Bevan A Blues Singer's View reports...

Arriving in Derbyshire in sun, after having left home in cloud and spent an hour or so of the journey in a cloud, seemed unusually symbolic of what Swanwick has tended to mean to me! Attractive pink lists for discussion groups enabled us to working out who wasn't there (a lot of interviews about Christian people), although Pete's new pseudo-nym of "Hannah Woolmer" didn't make this any easier! First up, of course, some inimitable

As has become usual, members of the Young Adults Group (YAG) split themselves between the main programme and their own sessions at this year's AIF conference. We spent the first afternoon with 'the Just as the main programme includes a business session, so does YAG's! steeped in 'interchurch family issues' The differences between the timing of, and beliefs about, baptism in the free and established churches was discussed by the four speakers, and the experiences of members of AIF who had had particularly successful or problematic experiences were interviewed by Bev Hollins.



Chris Bard ice-breaking. I think some of us thought the waking-up effect of making loud animal noises was to counter the sleep-inducing effect of listening to theologians discuss Christian initiation (not my view!). (continued overleaf)

To me, as a member of YAG, it seems that the greatest problems for Inter-church couples are often those thrown up by the impending first communion or confirmation of their children. It is the dogmatic denominational distinctions, which create rifts that keep Catholics apart from other Christians, and Anglicans from members of Free Churches. Hearing about the theology behind the denominational differences helped to explain why these circum-

stances occur, and was generally considered to be of just as much interest to members of YAG as to 'the adults'.

The YAG sessions on the Sunday morning were independent of the main conference, and were led by Matt Stuart, of the Joshua Generation. Using examples in the first two chapters of Daniel, he encouraged YAG to consider the issues that are faced at university, and the ways in which challenges can be turned to an advantage.



Our AGM was used to decide upon our theme for next year's conference, agree on a location for the YAG social weekend in February 2004, and consider our involvement in AIF and other ecumenical organisations. Furthermore, a committee was elected to organise our speakers for next year's conference, and make the arrangements for the social weekend.

YAG members have never been noted for their tendency to hurry to bed in the evenings, and the social side of this year's conference continued into the early morning, quite apart from taking up meal times, coffee breaks, and free time. Many members of YAG demonstrated their various talents in the concert on the Sunday evening, and retired to the Games Room in the small hours, where Hannah Woolmer found time to establish, and maintain, her dominance at table tennis.

Roma! (continued)

Mark gave a great address about his times at Crusader camp, readings were read and prayers were said, and we finished with a wonderful dance to 'Faith, Hope and Love'.

Monday had come too soon - we cleared up a scary number of sweet wrappers and coke bottles, trying to work around Ric and Kate who were still asleep in the middle of the floor. We ironed sheets to remove candle wax and returned various large pot plants to their rightful

homes. Then with promises of emails, phone calls, texts and future meetings the 14+ group was disbanded - sob, sob - and after a great final service and lunch it was time for goodbyes.

It was the end of an amazing conference. My highlights? - definitely the vigil and the service. Thanks have to go to Kathy, Laura and of course the PREPROMA Committee, for all their hard work in making the weekend what it was.