



What An Artist!

You do not have to be an art connoisseur to be able to appreciate a good work of art or a great artist. For instance, I have only a rudimentary knowledge of the visual arts, so for many years I thought "Starry Night" was a song by Don McLean, also known as "Vincent", as in Vincent Van Gogh. Yet I knew that Van Gogh was a recognised artist, and when I went to see the exhibition of the post impressionists I saw many pictures by Van Gogh. Among them was "Starry Night".

Forgive me for raving. I was blown away by many paintings there, but totally amazed by Starry Night. I will try to explain. The scene is a marine bay at night, with a foreshore sweeping away from you into the picture, and the promenade lights and stars are reflected in the waters. But when you see it 'live' the water moves! Suddenly the waves seem to be alive. And here is why: the artist painted the water in shallow scoops or scollops of the brush, in oil paint. He used so much paint that each scollop is a slight 3 dimensional shape providing a concave mirror reflection of the room lights above or around you. So as your eyes move, or your head moves slightly, the reflection of the light moves, and makes it look like the water is moving! Wow!

So I immediately thought, "Wow, isn't Van Gogh brilliant to think of this and to do this!" My attention had moved from the wonder of the creation to the one who created it, the artist.

Then recently I was reminded of Ephesians 2:10 in the New Living Bible "... you are God's masterpiece..." So what happens now? does our attention rest with the masterpiece or the Master? Yes it is awe-inspiring what God has done for us in Christ Jesus - especially as outlined in Ephesians in the first three chapters. Indeed what God has done is nothing less than pure genius! So do we focus on us or do we give praise and glory to the Artist - to God?

As the song says: "...its all about You, Lord, all about You." Next time you look at another person, or a sunrise or sunset, or at yourself in the mirror, remember to be totally wowed, and give the Artist, our God, a hearty cheer and a heart full of thanks and praise!



Mick Brown
President, BackYard Ministries

BOOK REVIEW

"Making Your Home Sustainable" by Derek Wrigley

Subtitled "A guide to retrofitting" this book is the definitive guide to home improvement with a view to saving energy waste.

It is not just a usable and readable book, it has all the facts and figures helpfully set out along with understandable illustrations.

What makes this book credible is that it grew from the writer's own experience as he experimented on his own home in Canberra. All the ideas have been field tested and provides the empirical grounding that you need. Somethings just aren't economic, so here's where you can find that out. There are bright ideas that you may never have dreamed of, but can see in action. For instance, why pay for pelmets on your curtains when you can just place cardboard along the curtain track? One problem: I have to return the book to Jim one day!

Mick Brown



HALLELUJAH!HALLELUJAH!HALLELUJAH!HALLELUJAH!HALLELUJAH!HALLELUJAH!HALLELUJAH!

***"The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."* Matt 13:33 (ESV)**

Subverting the kingdoms of this earth...

These were words Mick spoke to Jamie Pryor (Backyard board member and Director of Unity College Australia). We were discussing the kind of effect that the College was seeking to have as it takes its place in the new era of Christianity that is coming of age. However we

chose not to use this description because some idiot somewhere was likely to call us terrorists or something equally outrageous and erroneous. Nevertheless, it does capture something of what Jesus says when he describes the Kingdom of God as "leaven", slowly, unseen, but effectively transforming all that it encounters (Matthew 13:13). The question remains: who are you influencing? Whether you are "salt" or "leaven", you have nothing to do unless you have someone with whom you can relate and offer an opportunity for their transformation by God.

Yard by Yard

30 July 2011

PERSONAL NEWS ENVIRONMENT

As mentioned already, the summer was wet and cool. Autumn was wet and prolonged, and then winter hit and we have had a lot of sub-zero mornings. Wet days we collect water, sunny days we generate electricity. Overcast days are not popular - but rather too frequent this year. Still, we do well, and have just had a measure and quote for curtains in 2 of our main rooms. We bought a worm farm, and it is going gangbusters! Farm from Aldi (end-of-sale cheap because they must be unfashionable now) and mail-order worms! Amazing!

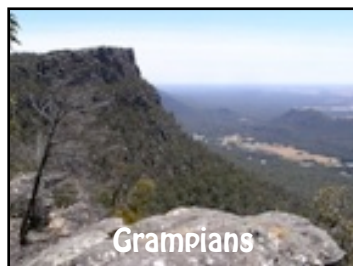
TENT-MAKING

The activity at Unity College has picked up considerably this year, and semester 2 especially so. This allows us to continue to minister to students and others with confidence. Lyn has taken on some students to tutor, as well as continuing to help disadvantaged students at school. By following a lead from the Lord and selling our house in Emerald Beach we have set about paying out our mortgages and stabilised our finances. Given the current economic circumstances this is good!

OTHER STUFF

Neighbourhood Watch continues to provide opportunities to meet and converse with neighbours. Mick has been busy with Walk to Emmaus, which has put on a special day a short while back. This movement provides moments when Mick's diplomacy and pastoring skills are needed.

Canberra does public events rather well, and so we went out to see "Enlighten" which was based around fireworks and the illumination of public buildings. Don't miss the next one!



Grampians



The Apostles

FAMILY

We have been trying to see a bit more of Mick's Mum who is now 89 years old, and still quite robust, but needing some more connection with family. The grandchildren have had birthdays, so we have been up and down to Sydney a bit.



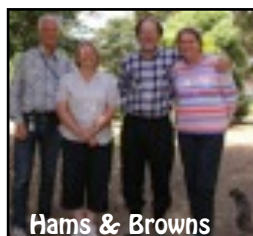
On a broader front, we have just sold our beautiful house in lovely Emerald Beach, sold the Land Rover and bought a used Nissan X-Trail (new model) and had a wonderful holiday over the New Year on the Great Ocean Road and Grampians. This was where the land Rover died, and the

NRMA rescued us with a hire car - benefits of extra cover!



Kirkmans and Browns

We have gone 6 months without the second car, and it was difficult at times. A scooter sometimes just doesn't cut it! We spent New Year's eve with Alan and Mimi Kirkman - longtime friends when we were young marrieds. Later we



Hams & Browns

stayed with Bruce and Sue Ham, of same vintage, just south of the Grampians.

GARDENING

The summer produced quite well for us, although the corn was only average, and the fruit trees disappointing. Part of this was because of the very wet, and below heat, summer. Still we have enjoyed the carrots, pumpkins, onions, potatoes, lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries, and garlcs, plus a few broccoli. The grass thrived in the wet, and we had a luscious green apron around the patio. Mick has bought a new grape to grow alongside the white grape, and supersede it in 2 year's time. The old one was not seedless.



National Library at Enlighten

HOW DO YOU FIND US?

WE LOVE VISITORS...

...So please call us or email us to get instructions. Because this newsletter goes over the internet to anyone, we felt it was more secure to remove the physical address/instructions: but don't let this deter you!

Yard by Yard

30 July 2011

MINISTRY NEWS

CHURCH IN THE HOME

We continue to meet and pray with other like minded people to reach those around us, usually we do thins on a Sunday evening. Our house meetings have been strengthened by the arrival of Trish, who is a Defence wife, and hopes to stay for a while in the area. We are joining in the Grace Canberra project called Lifes-tream. Check out the Grace Canberra website for de-tails: www.gracecanberra.com.au



Grace, Ali, Mick

MUSIC

Mick has sung a few more times at the pub this year, and has introduced 2 Unity College students to the scene. They sing 3 part harmony stuff from Simon and Garfunkle to Everly Brothers and Johnny Cash and June Carter - under the acronym of GLAM. They have some Larry Norman numbers ready to go, but missions and sickness have intervened at present. Leading worship at Grace Canberra has been rather intense lately, but we are training new talent. Also Mick is back in the studio! An Album usually would be about 12 songs or about an hour of music. 4 have been completed, and the fifth has begun. Please pray that Mick has the energy to keep going!



Grace, Ali, Mick

MISSION TO NORTHERN TERRITORY



The N.T. Mission Team

Mick went with 11 other students and staff into the north again this year. It was the coldest June on record, and we knew it! The group camped at



Manyallaluk and also Barunga, where they joined in a massive Aboriginal Festival. Ministry was to the local church, the children and the schools. Prior to going a massive fundraising effort saw more singing and performing by Mick and Jamie.



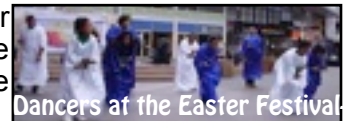
Guitar school at Barunga

EASTER

Each year there is a Prayer vigil on Mount Ainslie through the night. Mick, the



Mountaintop Prayer



Dancers at the Easter Festival

College and Harvest Fellowship joined for one shift. They also helped in the multi-cultural festival on Easter Day in Garema Place.

WEBSITE

The Web-Site has grown up! We are now able to receive donations, sell CDs and allow people to sponsor aspects of BackYard Ministries directly! Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the expanded web-site, as you may find an opportunity to join in with what we are doing in a direct and helpful way. This has taken quite a bit of effort on Mick's part, as he has had to learn new web skills and also how to do web trading using PayPal and Credit Card.

You can use the Home Page as a one-stop news, weather, daily reading and Dilbert point, or find out where we are meeting and what we are doing. It's all there! Mick is presently considering weather to ditch this newsletter in favour of an E-zine. Your feedback on this idea (please email) would be appreciated.

info@backyardministries.org.au
www.backyardministries.org.au



Mick & Jamie



Birthday Party!



View From a Bouncy Castle

Yard by Yard

30 July 2011

PRAYER POINTS

SUNDAY

Grace Canberra still requires a lot of worship leading this year. Praise that they are now drawing on younger resources. Mick does not believe he is called to be the backbone. Praise God for Lyn who is an expert projectionist!

MONDAY

The Walk to Emmaus Community had to cancel its famous Walks in 2011 because of illness in strategic people. Still gives Mick plenty to do as we keep community building. The new Board is very good!

TUESDAY

We praise God that prayers for a turnaround in student intake have been answered - especially from overseas. Please pray that our program with our Australian partners would prosper, as these are vital outreach opportunities. Pray that churches will use the Government's Traineeship program to their full advantage.

WEDNESDAY

The Wednesday fellowship has matured into a more purposeful disciple group. Please keep praying that we can bless others and connect with people.

THURSDAY

Continue to pray that Mick keeps up the recording and writing. Its not that Mick is short of songs so much as time and motivation.

FRIDAY

Lyn ministers to children with special needs at school, and also to other women in the Grace context. Praise God for this and the relationships she makes doing it. Please pray for Lyn's relationship with her Tuition students and families, that God will create bridges and Lyn takes opportunities.

SATURDAY

Praise God that the house at Emerald Beach has been sold! Praise God we have a new(ish) car! Thank God that our sons are doing well at their respective ministries, and pray that all our extended family will keep pursuing God with all their heart.

GAINING YARDS

You can help bring Jesus into homes by praying for us, passing this newsletter to a friend, giving a gift on a regular or one-off basis, or by buying a CD. Please use this form and partner with us and Jesus. You can give direct on-line,

www.backyardministries.org.au or as below:

YES MICK AND LYN! Together we can help gain more yards with Jesus!

- Allow me to pray for you
- I will give a newsletter to a friend
- I can give a gift of \$ per month, or a gift of \$ per year to support the work of this ministry
- Mail me a CD for \$20 each including p & p (please circle the CD of your choice)

Ask for both CDs for \$30/pair including p & p.



Bits & Bobs Major Minor

PAYMENT to BackYard Ministries Inc. BSB 082-908 A/C 872711811 (National Australia Bank, Gungahlin, ACT)
CHEQUES/MONEY ORDERS by arrangement.

Contact us: info@backyardministries.org.au

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