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# Quest

Spring 2008

The magazine of the Australia New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Association

## Our Mission Statement

The Australia New Zealand Unitarian Association will support and encourage all member groups in their continued development of Unitarian ideals of freedom reason and tolerance and their interaction with local communities in an ethical, responsible and committed way

As Unitarians we affirm principles of justice, tolerance of difference, respect and equality for all people. With resolve and preparedness to struggle in an atmosphere of interdependent relationship and inclusivity, we search for greater understanding and wisdom, we reach out to each other and with wider community with love and compassion.

Through our sharing, may we gain a sense of our place in the complex web of creation and, as we radiate the joy of creative life, may we feel the spirit of freedom, peace and harmony

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**



This issue of Quest is doubles as a mid-term report – we are halfway between conferences – and covers the work of the executive committee.

Last year has been primarily focused on internal housekeeping. This follows from the decision at our last conference in Perth to change our name from the Australian New Zealand Unitarian Association (ANZUA) to the Australia New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Association (ANZUUA) This has required us to rewrite our constitution, giving us the opportunity to update it as well. Besides the name, there are two other big changes. Firstly, we have altered the nature of our membership from allowing individual memberships for ministers, to corporate memberships only, making us an association of groups. Secondly, we have expanded the executive from a small elected body of four to having a delegate from each group. The new constitution will go to the next conference for ratification, so I urge you to read it We have also adopted a protocol to cover website content. We had nothing in place prior to this.

Undoubtedly the most radical change to how we operate is the adoption of using 'Skype' for our meetings, which has revolutionised our administration. Prior to this change the cost of conference call meetings restricted executive meetings to perhaps two or three a year. The last meeting before using Skype cost us over \$800 for an hour. Now, we meet monthly at no cost. This has enabled us to complete the work at hand. It is amazing to think that nine of us, across 4 time zones, can meet for an hour a month at no cost to the organization. It also allows us to keep in touch.

With our re-organisation substantially completed, our focus will now turn to considering some projects that will be more outward looking and have a more direct influence on the wellbeing of our members. The committee is currently looking at a number of possible projects.

Planning is well underway for our next conference in Sydney in October 2009. It is an historic occasion, being the first ANZUUA conference, so I hope as many people as possible will attend.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of QUEST – it is the first in a while!!- and I welcome any comments you have about what you would like to see in future issues. You can contact me at [units@clear.net.nz](mailto:units@clear.net.nz)

Derek McCullough

## **NEW CONSTITUTION**

The name change means that we need to alter our constitution, which gives us the opportunity to tidy up other parts of constitution so that it better reflects the organization as it exists now. The new constitution is below, with the **changes highlighted in red.**

### **THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND UNITARIAN **UNIVERSALIST** ASSOCIATION**

**1. NAME** The name of the Association shall be "The Australian and New Zealand Unitarian **Universalist** Association" hereinafter referred to as "The Association".

#### **2.OBJECTS**

The objects of the Association shall be:

- a) To promote union, sympathy and co-operation among those who reject for themselves and others the imposition of creeds or articles of theological belief as a condition of association in religious fellowship.
- b) To meet for consultation on matters affecting the well-being and interests of members of the association, and to take such action thereon as may be considered desirable.
- c) To help in the founding of congregations and fellowships which do not require for themselves or their ministers subscription or assent to any doctrinal articles of belief.
- d) To publish and circulate literature dealing with religious, theological and other subjects.
- e) To do all such lawful things as may be incidental to the attainment of the above objects, or any of them.
- f) **To affiliate with other organisations having similar aims, and with other Unitarian Universalist groups both locally and internationally.**

#### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

- a) There shall be the following classes of membership:
  - i. Corporate  
Congregations, Fellowships and Societies approved by the Association acting through their appointed representative, viz. **One Delegate from each Congregation or Fellowship or Society per 25 members or part thereof to a maximum of 4, who have reached the age of 18 years, on the Church, Fellowship or Society role.**
  - ii. Corresponding  
Any individual who, living in Australia or New Zealand but not within travelling distance of a member group, is accepted by the Executive in accordance with **Item 2d of the Rules for Membership**. Corresponding members shall not have voting rights.
- b) Application for admission to membership of the Association shall be made in accordance with the procedure decided by a meeting of the Association voting on a recommendation of the Executive.
- c) The conditions for admission to membership of the Association shall be decided by a meeting of the Association voting on a recommendation of the Executive, and such conditions shall be made public.
- d) The amounts of affiliation fees for Corporate members shall be determined at a meeting of the Association. Any alteration to the amounts of affiliation fees

or subscriptions shall not take effect until the beginning of the next following financial year after the meeting.

- e) The financial year of the Association shall be from 1 July to 30 June of the following year.
- f) Each corporate member of the Association shall appoint one of their delegates as a representative **to serve on the Executive Committee** and act as a point of contact for that church or fellowship for communications with the Executive. The church or fellowship must give the **ANZUUA** secretary 30 calendar days' notice if at any time it wishes to change its representative.
- g) **The Executive may at any time request by letter any member to retire from the membership for the breach of these rules. If that group does not retire, the question of expulsion shall be dealt with at a General Meeting of the Association. At this meeting the member shall be allowed to offer an explanation, after which, if two thirds of the delegates vote for expulsion the group shall forthwith cease to be a member (without releasing the group from any existing liability to the Association).**

#### **4. MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- a) The Association shall meet at such times and places as shall be decided by the Executive. Meetings shall ordinarily be held at least once every two years.
- b) The Secretary of the Association shall give not less than 3 months notice of any meetings of the Association to all members and delegates.
- c) The quorum for a meeting of the Association shall be eight delegates.
- d) The President or in his/her absence a person elected by the delegates at the meeting shall act as Chairperson at all meetings of the Association.
- c) Unless a quorum is present at a meeting of the Association, no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall stand adjourned to a date to be decided by those at the meeting.
- f) Any three delegates shall have power to request a postal ballot of members and delegates. Such a ballot shall be held not less than six months after receipt of the requisition. Four weeks from the time of mailing of the ballot papers shall be allowed for the return of the papers.

#### **5. GOVERNMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- a) The Association shall have the following Officers, who together **with the other members** will constitute the Executive:

- i. President
- ii. Secretary
- iii. Treasurer
- iv. if the meeting shall so decide, a vice-President.

These officers shall be elected at a meeting of the Association and shall hold office until the next election of officers when all offices shall be declared vacant.

- b) Subject to directions given at a General Meeting, the day to day business of the Association shall be managed by the Executive. The Executive **Committee** shall give notice to member representatives of any substantive matter on which it is about to make a decision.

c) Decisions shall be made by agreement of the Executive **Committee by simple majority**. In the case of any disagreement, the matter shall be put to representatives of member groups for a vote.

d) The Executive shall inform member groups within three months of making any decision.

e) The Executive may transact business via electronic mail, fax or phone **or voip (voice over internet protocol = 'skype')**. The Secretary shall keep a record of all decisions.

f) The Executive may make, alter or rescind By-Laws for the conduct of its business.

g) The Executive shall have power to appoint such sub-committees as it shall from time to time consider necessary. The convenor of each sub-committee shall have power as necessary to co-opt. h) In the event of any single casual vacancy among the Officers, the Executive shall have the power to appoint a replacement. The Executive shall inform church representatives as soon as is practical, and in any case within the following month. In the event that 50% or more of delegates and members object within the following month, the appointment shall lapse. Any new appointment shall then be made by a vote of members and delegates.

## **6. VOTING**

a) Voting on any matter at any meeting of the Association shall be by show of hands unless a motion requesting a

secret ballot for a particular matter shall be properly proposed and carried before such a vote shall be taken. Notice

of motion for such a request need not be given before the meeting.

b) Except as provided in rules 12 and 13, voting shall be by a simple majority of those who exercise their vote.

c) Except as provided in Rule 6(d) all individual members and delegates of the Association shall have one vote at meetings of the Association.

d) In the event of a tie in the voting the Chairperson shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.

**e) Proxy voting within a Church or Fellowship, shall be allowed at the discretion of the Executive Committee at the beginning of each voting session.**

## **7. REMUNERATION AND FINANCE**

The Executive shall determine what remuneration or honoraria, if any, shall be paid.

## **8. FINANCE**

a) The Association shall have the power to acquire and accept any Devise, Legacy, Bequest, Donation or Subscription for the promotion of the objects of the Association.

b) Any moneys which may accrue from affiliation fees or subscriptions or the activities of the Association shall be paid into the Association's bank account to be operated by the Treasurer and any one other officer and used for purposes compatible with the objects of the Association.

c) An auditor shall be appointed by the Executive.

## **9. MINUTES**

Minutes of every meeting of the Association shall be recorded in books kept for that purpose and shall be signed by the Chairperson at such meeting or at a subsequent meeting at which such minutes are read and confirmed.

## **10. REPORTS**

At any meeting of the Association reports shall be submitted by the President and the Treasurer and an audited Balance Sheet shall be presented.

## **11. AVAILABILITY OF THE CONSTITUTION**

- a) Every individual member or delegate shall on application to the Secretary be entitled to receive an up-to-date copy of the Constitution of the Association.
- b) An up-to-date copy of the Constitution shall be kept in the Minute Book and shall be available for reference at every meeting of the Association.

## **12. ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

a) Notice of any proposed alterations or additions and the terms thereof shall be given to all members and delegates not less than three months before the meeting at which they are to be considered.

b) All alterations or additions must be made by resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of those who exercise their vote, and any amendment must be fairly within the scope of the original proposals, provided also that no alteration or addition shall be made inconsistent with the objects of the Association as set forth in paragraph 2 above.

## **13. WINDING-UP OF THE ASSOCIATION**

In the event of the winding-up of the Association as a result of a resolution at a General Meeting passed by not less than two thirds of those who exercise their vote, or as the result of a resolution passed by two-thirds of those who exercise their vote in a postal ballot of members and delegates, the balance of the bank account and any assets shall be transferred to the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Essex Hall, London, to be held in trust and to be used as considered appropriate by the officers of the General Assembly for development work in Australia and New Zealand.

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

a) For the purpose of any clause in this Constitution, notice shall be deemed to have been given if written notice is posted to members not less than the number of days or months in advance that are required by the relevant clause in the Constitution. b) For the purpose of any clause in this Constitution the word "delegate" shall be interpreted to mean any delegate of a corporate member of the Association as defined in Rule 3(a)(i).



## **NEW RULES OF MEMBERSHIP**

By now all groups should have received by now a request to apply for membership to the new organization. This is necessary as we didn't have any records of membership from the old ANZUA. They were lost sometime ago in the shift of officebearers. With all current members using the same format, as outlined in the conditions of membership, we will finally have a complete record of our members in one place! This will make our incorporation much easier, which at this stage is proposed as taking place in New Zealand.

### Procedure for Applications and Conditions for Admission to Corporate Membership of the Australian and New Zealand Unitarian **Universalist** Association

- 1 Procedure for Applications for Admission
  - a) A written application for membership shall be lodged with the Honorary Secretary of the Australian and New Zealand Unitarian **Universalist** Association ("the Association") not later than **SIX MONTHS** prior to a conference of the Association or not later than **SIX MONTHS** prior to a general meeting of the Association called in accordance with its constitution. **The Executive Committee** may, in its absolute discretion, waive **any** requirement of notice of at least **SIX MONTHS** in special circumstances.
  - b) Each application shall be 'accompanied by -
    - i). a copy of the constitution of the applicant **or evidence of the basis of the organisation.**
    - ii) a copy of the Articles of Association of the applicant, or evidence of the basis of its organisation, if not an incorporated body

- iii) a statement by the Honorary secretary or other appropriate officer of the applicant as to the number of financial members of the applicant body.
  - iv) any other material which the applicant wishes to have taken into account in relation to the Conditions for Admission to Corporate Membership of the Association.
- c) The application will be considered first by the **Executive Committee** of the Association, who will examine the application and recommend whether it ought to be accepted. The application will be considered thereafter by the delegates at a general meeting of the Association called in accordance with the constitution.
- d) No new corporate members shall be admitted to the Association unless its application is approved by a two thirds majority of the voting delegates present at the said general meeting of the Association.
- e) If the application is approved no new corporate member shall be admitted to the Association until payment of the affiliation fee as determined from time to time has been received by the Association.

2. Conditions for Admission to Corporate Membership of the Association

In considering any application the Council of the Association shall in its absolute discretion be satisfied that:-

- a) the applicant is a religious group which is a properly organised and stable Church or Fellowship and is making its application in good faith;
- b) the applicant has a minimum of **TEN** adult financial members.
- c) the applicant pledges itself to support the Association and its member Fellowships and Churches.
- d) the applicant subscribes to the objects of the Association set out in the Constitution as follows:-
  - i) To promote union, sympathy and co-operation among those who reject for themselves and others the imposition of creeds or articles of theological belief as a condition of association in religious fellowship;
  - ii) To meet for consultation on matters affecting the well-being and interests of members of the Association, and to take such action thereon as may be considered advisable;
  - iii) To help with the founding of Congregations and Fellowships which do not require for themselves or their ministers subscription or assent to any doctrinal articles of belief.,
  - iv) To publish and circulate literature dealing with religious, theological and other subjects;
  - v) To do all such other lawful things as may be incidental to the attainment of the above objects, or any of them.

- vi) To affiliate with other organisations having similar aims, and with other Unitarian Universalist groups both locally and internationally.
- e) the applicant will be affirmative in spirit, inclusive in fellowship and mutually supportive in its relationship with other member Fellowships and Churches and in particular:-
- i) the applicant undertakes to carry out the objects of the Association set out in paragraph 2(d) herein;
  - ii) the applicant does not exclude from its local membership any person because of race age, belief, colour, sex, affectional or sexual preference, differently abled or national origin;
  - iii) the applicant is Congregational in polity, that is, the final authority to make decisions affecting the Congregation must be vested in the membership of the Church or Fellowship;
  - iv) the applicant offers a balance programme of religious activity including worship and/or discussion at least ten times per annum.

## **WEBSITE**

Here is an update on our website situation from our webmaster Hugh Lambert

“Simply, "www.anzuua.org" now leads to the existing site, in which I have made a few editings in order to change allusions to "anzua" to "anzuua" where appropriate. The previous website address (www.anzua.org/anzua\_alt") will still work, so any website (e.g. the UUA's or UK's GA&FCC's or other congregation's who've not caught up with the availability of the new website address) using the previous website address, and all existing search engine 'hits' using that previous address will still reach our ANZUUA website.

A more comprehensive revision of the ANZUUA website itself needs to be thought about, then implemented.”

As directed by the Perth conference, we have adopted a protocol to manage the content of our website.

- 1 The purpose of the web site is to promote Unitarianism in Australia and New Zealand
- 2 To support Unitarian principles
  - Freedom of religious expression
  - Tolerance for religious ideas
  - The authority of reason and conscience
  - The never ending search for truth
  - The unity of experience
  - The worth and dignity of each human person
  - The ethical application of religion
  - Care for our planet earth
- 3 The web should list the contact details of all paid up member groups
- 4 Associated groups can only be listed with the approval of the Executive Management Committee by simple majority
- 5 Party political information is not to be entered

- 6 Information in regard to social action causes can only be approved by the Executive Management Committee by simple majority
- 7 The web site must not discriminate in terms of race, religion or gender
- 8 Items that may embarrass , denigrate or harm any member will not be accepted
- 9 Any items that may be contentious in terms of any of the above must be referred to the Executive Committee for approval by simple majority
- 10 The content shall comply with the laws of Australia and New Zealand.



## **Group News**

### **Adelaide**

We hope all is going well with our fellow ANZUUs. We are now midway between conferences, so this is a good time to exchange news. Our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations for the little Shady Grove bush chapel in the Adelaide Hills took place on 4/5 October. On this happy occasion, activities included a re-enactment of the little chapel's origin as a school house, history talks, reminiscences, a sumptuous lunch, unveiling of plaques at the chapel and cemetery, wine sales, and an evening service in the chapel.

While on the subject of Shady Grove, our lay preacher there, Rob McPherson, has applied to train as a Minister at the Unitarian College Manchester – the same institution at which our current Minister, the Rev. Jo lane, qualified. At the time of writing this update, the result of his application is not known.

Our building renovation plans are taking longer to implement than expected. This is probably a good thing, given the global financial downturn. The slowness of some firms to give quotes etc. will mean we have some time to raise funds before having to commit to any expenditure. The first big fundraiser we have planned is a Quiz Night on 24 October. The next year looks like it will be filled with social activities; our congregation will be a vibrant one. It will be interesting to see what effect all the activity generated by fund raising has on our level of membership, which has remained about the same as it was a year ago. We have always held the occasional charity fundraiser, but over the next three years, little, if any, of the proceeds resulting from holding social events will be given away. We are about to take a path we have not gone along before, and, no doubt, we'll learn much from the experience.

**Jane Brooks**

**Blenheim**

The Fellowship continues to operate with enthusiasm and average attendance figures of 16 are quite satisfactory taking into account members ages. Some modest publicity has hopefully given the group a public profile but has not yet resulted in membership increase. Small gains have been offset unfortunately, by member mortality.

Highlights of the first ten months of 2008 are; January we hosted Ann Fox, minister from Fairhaven in the USA and in April a Leaf Communion to observe the autumn equinox. In June a sermon by Rebekah McCullough and also in June, observance of Matariki and a communal meal. Over the winter a series of Saturday evening workshop meetings were run by Derek McCullough.

September was a highlight month with a Christchurch/Blenheim combined meeting at Kaikoura, and in Blenheim the national Sea of Faith Conference. October marked the Fellowship's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an appropriate and very well attended celebratory service.

The fellowship is fortunate to have regular monthly service visits by Derek McCullough, minister for Christchurch and Blenheim. Such visits are greatly appreciated as it is doubtful if the Fellowship could continue to function as it does without them.

In brief the Fellowship is in good heart and optimistic about its future.

***Frank Cartwright***



**Blenheim & Christchurch UUs at Takahanga Marae, Kaikoura, NZ**

## Christchurch

We have had another good year in Christchurch since the Perth conference. The highlights centre around our services, which have been varied and interesting. Our summer solstice service continues to draw our biggest crowd, with over 75 attending the final service of 2007 at Ka Whare Rehua.

The year featured guest speakers Almeric Cheng, from Buddhist Light International, Rev Ann Fox, from Massachusetts, Lesley Martin from the voluntary euthanasia organization Dignity New Zealand, and Anna Freed, from The Prostitutes Collective. Perhaps our most controversial speaker was Dr Ghazala Anwar, our All Heretics Day speaker, who spoke on Islam without the Koran.

There were also many good services led by members of our group. Our social action projects last year were organizing a giant garage sale to help out one of our members, and supporting the Kimbe Hospital pediatric ward, in Papua New Guinea, where two of our members are working as volunteers. Perhaps the highlight of the year was our retreat at the Takahanga Marae in Kaikoura, our annual spring solstice get-together with the Blenheim Unitarians.

The fellowship thriving, perhaps best illustrated by our gradually increasing numbers and a new, younger management team.

***Derek McCullough***

## Perth

Well here we are 12 months out from hosting the Oct 07 Conference in Perth. The planning and preparation was pretty time consuming and was the main focus of our group for quite a while. The Conference went well and the euphoria lasted for a while, but after that our group felt a little flat and in need of a new focus.

To this end we held a weekend retreat which was a great success and ended in confirming that we were pretty comfortable with our current direction. However we did tweak a few things :

- Added more music
- Refreshed our guest speaker list
- Started a philosophy group
- Added more social content.

Our numbers are up to 29 members with more males attending our meetings. Things are going well and we recently donated \$500 to the Warawee Women's Refuge.

*Peter Woods*

## Letters

**This letter was sent on our behalf to the members of the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church.**

Dear Rev Chris Buice and members of the TVUUC.

The UU hearts across Australia and New Zealand sank when they heard the news of the tragedy in Knoxville. We find it hard to comprehend such an act of mindless, hateful violence.

But through the grief, sorrow and anger emerges a message of tremendous courage – not only the courage of Glen McKendry and the others who disarmed the gunman, but also the courage of the TVUUC in holding true to their liberal religious values in a hostile environment. We applaud such courage and are proud to be part of a religious community that includes the TVUUC.

This Saturday, starting at 6pm (10am Sunday local time) chalices will be lit in honour and sympathy with you all at this time of mourning. May our thoughts and prayers offered at this time make their way to your hearts.

Sincerely  
Derek McCullough  
President  
Australia New Zealand Unitarian Universalist Association.

**This letter is in response to a suggestion regarding future conferences.**

### **IMAGINE ANZUUA WITHOUT CONFERENCES**

During one of the ANZUUA Executive meetings conducted via SKYPE, the issue of the downside of travelling came up. We have all been made aware that air travel produces an enormous amount of carbon emissions, and we have been urged by environmental ethicists to refrain from flying unless it is absolutely necessary, such as for a family emergency. Going by road or rail instead won't solve the carbon emission problem, and those alternatives wouldn't get us across the Tasman Sea! Even if there was a ferry service, surface travel over a long distance often works out to be more expensive than economy class air travel.

This raises another issue about travelling to conferences – its affordability. If there are no people in a member congregation who are willing to pay for their own travelling expenses, that congregation has to raise funds somehow to send delegates to a conference. Sometimes delegates are happy to incorporate the conference into a holiday they wish to take anyway, or a social visit to family and friends living in or near the host city. But this may not always be the case.

The suggestion was made during the ANZUUA meeting via SKYPE that we should consider doing away with the biennial ANZUUA conferences. We had been conducting business quite successfully through SKYPE, and for someone who already has internet access, it is costing almost nothing – except for the initiator of the call.

This is an important issue, and I thought it should be opened to discussion through “Quest”. Personally, I think that ANZUUA would wither away, if we cease having conferences. SKYPE conference calls are limited to 9 people. A major reason, I think, that the SKYPE meetings have been a success is that all of us on the current executive had the opportunity to meet each other face-to-face in Perth, and get to know each other, at least a little. I suppose there is nothing to stop people from forming other SKYPE groups for chatting and discussion, but that is more likely to happen with people who already know each other and wish to keep in contact. We can also communicate via “Quest”, but I wouldn’t be surprised if most contributors and readers have been to at least one ANZUUA conference, even if that was only because it was held in their city. To be perfectly honest, I think it would be hard to maintain enthusiasm for ANZUUA if we all knew there would never be another conference.

What do you all think about this – is there a way of having affordable face-to-face conferences within environmental constraints? Is cyber contact sufficient?

Jane Brooks

## **ICUU News**

The next ICUU meeting is being held in Kolozsvar, Transylvania, from the September 1 to 5, 2009. This was announced at the recent executive meeting in London. This was the first such meeting attended by our representative, Pauline Rooney. She has been nominated to stand again at the next council meeting.

One of the Austral/asian regional projects in the last year was “The Front Door Project” which sought to get photos of as many groups’ front doors as possible. Below is the front door of the church in Dumaguete, Indonesia.



## **ANZUUA 2009 Sydney**

**Friday October 2<sup>nd</sup> – Monday October 5<sup>th</sup>.**

Greetings Unitarians & kindred spirits,

You are invited to attend ANZUUA 2009. As in Perth, the accommodation will be at the conference venue: *The Centre* in Randwick ([www.thecentre.com.au](http://www.thecentre.com.au))

tariff (including breakfast):

single room - \$60 per night

single + ensuite - \$80 per night

twin share - \$50 per night per person

family & deluxe & double - \$120 per person

The program, booking details, speakers, information on workshops and plenary session will be sent in the coming months.

For initial enquiries please contact:

Michael Spicer at [info\\_syduni@yahoo.com.au](mailto:info_syduni@yahoo.com.au) or phone 0423393364



**This is Perth 2007. Will you be in the picture for Sydney 2009?**

ANZUUA Executive:

Derek McCullough (Blenheim)

Peter Abrehart (Melbourne)

Peter Woods (Perth)

Laurence Gormley (Spirit of Life)

Jane Brooks (Adelaide)

Kathryn Crissman (Brisbane)

Max Moss (Auckland)

Paul Simmonds (Christchurch)

Peter Crawford (Sydney)

President

Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer

## **History Corner**

From “The Halfway House to Infidelity” by Dorothy Scott, a history of the Melbourne Unitarian Church published in 1980.

“The humanist and rationalist philosophy adopted by the Melbourne Unitarian Church in the thirties and forties, and culminating in the fifties, was a response to the post-war secular society. The secular society is not a fixed entity and so the task of making the church relevant is a changing one. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in the late sixties and early seventies, there has emerged a movement which rejects science and rationality as the criteria of truth.

It is difficult to assess how far such a trend is a superficial and transient reaction to post war economic growth and materialism; but it does pose some important problems and dilemmas for the adaptation of the churches to what is “relevant” and “meaning-ful” to modern man. The fertile ground for the anti-rationalist movement has been among the educated middle class of the post war generation. Many were radicalised and their attitudes were crystallised by the anti-war movement of the sixties. The “counterculture” which grew out of the anti-war movement and other sources in society, rejected western science and logic as the test of reality. They argues that the scientific method and perspective was not “the truth” but a culturally determined belief system. The deep disillusionment of this generation with the political power structure, the use of science and technology for the destruction of the human environment and the bitter realisation that affluent industrialised society does not necessarily satisfy the non material needs of man, has led to a search for “alternative” experiences and modes of thought. This has led in diverse and clearly inter-related directions, such as the “back to the earth” movement with its emphasis on self-sufficiency, creativity and harmony with nature in both rural and urban settings; experiences of “altered states of consciousness”, eastern mysticism, yoga and meditation; the rejection of western medical practice and an emphasis on “natural healing, childbirth and diet; and humanistic psychology with its goals of self-realisation, non-sexist relationships and ”alternative” therapies.



**Melbourne Unitarian Peace Memorial Church**