

## *Basic Training*

With the arrival of a new baby we recently bought a red buggy through Trade Me. Baby buggies employ a range of ingenious (and often frustrating) folding techniques. And, because second-hand purchases seldom come with the instruction manual, when we picked the buggy up it was very valuable to have the previous owner show us how to fold it up.

When learning to do something it's great when someone shows you what you need to know. Learning how to use a new gadget, or learning to cook or to knit – the experience can be so much better when you find someone offering to guide you through the basics. The same is true when you arrive in a new place or have to find your way somewhere. Arriving at new school, a new job, navigating public transport in a new city – it all doesn't seem quite so mysterious and alien when someone is able to show you.

At Christmas we remember that God came to us in person, and showed us how to be human. Jesus gave everything in commitment to humanity, showing us all we are able to be through the salvation he brings. Telling people something gets them so far, showing them is far more meaningful.

The Wellington Boys' and Girls' Institute (BGI) has a long history of specialising in showing young people who they can be. When BGI was started by people of St John's there was an intentional emphasis on being practical; offering young people encouragement to grow into who they have potential to be. With a vision to improve people's opportunities combined with a belief that every person is made in the image of God the BGI has been, and continues to be, committed to showing young people what's

possible. I encourage you to find out more about the work of BGI, and particularly the 'Continuum of Need' which identifies a range of ways young people can be supported through the work of BGI.

When any of us look out for others, showing them something to help them, we join in what Jesus is doing. When we don't just focus on our own needs but on the needs of others, we experience something of the costly giving Jesus shows us and calls us into. And by doing so, we enrich the human experience for others and for ourselves.

Yours in Christ,

*Allister Lane*

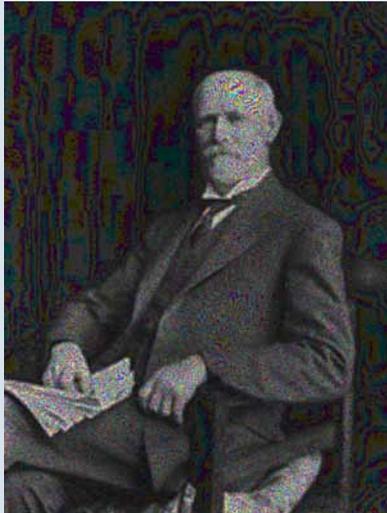


*(Allister is one of the ministers at St John's since 2008. He is now also a father of three. His email is [a.lane@stjohnsinthecity.org.nz](mailto:a.lane@stjohnsinthecity.org.nz))*

# EDITORIAL

In the unlikely event that I am ever interviewed in a Sunday newspaper or glossy magazine and asked that inevitable question 'which person (living or dead) would you like as a dinner guest?', I would choose Sir George Troup. I find Sir George Troup to be a fascinating character; brimming with energy, courage, vision and one who personifies 'servant leadership'.

George Troup did not allow his humble Scottish beginnings to act as a barrier to his ambitions. He was the fifth of nine children. His father died when he was just 10 years of age. His mother worked as a seamstress. Upon his father's death his older siblings were forced to leave school and join the workforce in order to make ends meet. George won a place at the prestigious Robert Gordon's College in Aberdeen where he showed an aptitude for art. Following school he took up an engineering apprenticeship. George also attended night classes in art and architecture. Shortly after he completed his apprenticeship his mother died. At 20 years of age George sailed for New Zealand. Upon arrival in Dunedin he found work in the Otago Survey Department. Following further study at the Otago University School of Mines he commenced a 39 year career with New Zealand Railways, initially as a draughtsman.



Sir George Troup

Upon transfer to the railways head office in Wellington his association with St John's began. George was a visionary. Based on his personal experience at Regent Square Presbyterian Church in London he founded The Young Men's Bible Class. He acquired tennis courts and swimming pools and established Bible Class harriers and rugby teams, for the brand of 'muscular

Christianity' that he wanted to nurture. In 1903 George became the founding president of the Bible Class Union that was by now flourishing up and down the country.

A Sunday School for underprivileged boys was absorbed by the St John's Bible class. This developed into an organisation providing sports, music and educational opportunities for young boys. This was the genesis of the Wellington Boys' Institute which opened in 1893.

George Troup retired from the railways in 1925. Among his notable designs is the iconic Dunedin Railway Station. This earned him the sobriquet, 'Gingerbread George' for its ostentatious design. George's retirement was anything but passive. He was elected to the Wellington City Council and voted mayor in 1927. As mayor George anticipated the impact that air travel was going to have on a city like Wellington and he was responsible for turning a small aero club into Rongotai Airport. The idea must have come to him on a calm day!! Through

his indefatigable efforts as Mayor money was raised for the construction of an Art Gallery, Dominion Museum, War Memorial Carillon and a new railway station. When his period as Mayor concluded in 1931 he threw himself with typical vigour into a diverse range of educational, community and charitable organisations. Then of course there was St John's where he served as an elder. Little wonder that he was made a Knight Bachelor in 1931.

After our leisurely meal and perhaps a 'wee dram,' Sir George Troup and I would take a taxi ride around Wellington. We would stop at the airport and I would show George the plaque in the terminal acknowledging his contribution to the establishment of the airport. Around Wellington we would stop off and see the public buildings that he was involved in establishing. Finally we would pull up at St John's. His eyes would light up, I am sure, as he gazed upon the familiar building where he and his family worshipped for so many years. Then I would take him up Dixon Street to another building, this one not familiar to him, but one that bears his name. We would go inside and talk to the staff of the BGI about the programmes that they run for the Youth of Wellington. Sir George Troup would, I am sure be thrilled beyond words that his vision conceived some 120 years ago of assisting the youth of our city is still being realized. Long may it continue.

**Rob Anderson**



Dunedin Railway Station

## The St John's Website

Have you looked at the St John's website lately? It's well worth a look. It is everything a website should be: informative, easy to navigate, up to date and a repository of interesting material. It has proven to be useful in other ways as well.

Recently, when asked by her family how she would like to celebrate her 90th birthday a former Wellington Hospital nurse said that she would like to return to Wellington and visit her 'old haunts'. On the wards at Wellington Hospital in the late 1940s she remembered with fondness a fellow nurse whom she thought still lived in Wellington. She could not recall her surname but remembered that her first name was Anwyl. The lady's son googled the name Anwyl and Wellington and a name popped up with reference to the St John's website. From there it was a simple matter of contacting the church office to confirm whether it was the Anwyl in question and then ringing Anwyl Fowler. A very happy reunion and time of reminiscing ensued.

So remember...

[www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz](http://www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz)

**Rob Anderson**



# Seeing the BGI Picture

BGI's dream is that young people head off down the right road and do not get caught up in the many pitfalls on the wrong roads. BGI's mission is to improve the lives of young people who may be facing difficulty, and enhancing the lives of those doing well, by providing

opportunities for them to serve in the community.

We achieve this through the many programmes we offer, such as mentoring programmes like The Journey and Challenge for Change, artistic groups like Can Control that work on public murals, or Confidance that teaches dance in a strengths-based way. We run a ropes course in Wainuiomata, offer in school support through youth workers placed in schools and anti-bullying programmes, and have Strengthening Families based at BGI, which helps government and non government agencies work better together to produce better outcomes for families they work with. A Parenting Programme works alongside Challenge for Change, and TNT runs on Thursday nights for the children of the Parenting Programme. BGI also runs holiday programmes, a youth leadership development group called Link, and St John's Epic and Thrive youth groups.

BGI's partnership with St Johns benefits for both organisations. Many BGI staff and volunteers are members of the congregation at St Johns, and many of the congregation are members of BGI or serve on the Board. Some may not be aware that BGI staff members Nga Larsen and Dave Adams run St Johns' youth groups Thrive and Epic as a part of their BGI work. This partnership means youth group leaders have access to more support and resources than if they were doing it alone, and as a part of Dave's other BGI work he is able to support students starting a Christian club at High schools around Wellington as well as youth

work at Wellington High School.

A Māori proverb says "E kore te kumara i whakapahu i tona reka - The kumara never tells how sweet it is", speaking to the importance for Māori of being humble, and letting actions speak for themselves. Māori also say "Waiho ma te tangata e mihi – Let someone else sing your praises". Sometimes we underestimate our reputation – recently a Māori woman had come to us representing a government organisation with some funding, and told us she'd heard great things about our work in the community from her government friends. We've been told that no one else could do what we're doing, through our rich history, the strong relationship we have with St Johns, our staff, our mission and philosophy, and the way we work in partnership with people and organisations.

We can safely say there are hundreds of families better off, both through our work and also through partnerships we have with organisations such as St Johns. We always welcome volunteers to help out with our programmes, especially:

- Be a mentor on Challenge for Change or The Journey
- Cooking for our Parenting Programme and The Journey
- Help with childcare on Thursday nights
- Supervising and encouraging volunteer mentors
- Helping with the Parenting Course.

If you are interested in any of these volunteering opportunities, get in touch with BGI staff Ross Davis, Jacinta Krefft, Dave Adams or Nga Larsen on (04) 385 9549, or volunteer@bgi.org.nz.



BGI crew

We understand that members of St Johns are busy people, and may not have time to volunteer for us. However we would like to encourage the further development of our strong partnership – through conversations with the BGI Board, staff and volunteers, a simple prayer, or popping up for a cup of tea. We thank St Johns for the continuous support they have given us over the last 129 years, and we are looking forward to the next 129!

## The BGI Board is made up of:

Rev. Allister Lane	(4 years)
Andy Marshall	(~30 years)
Barry Spencer	(~30 years)
Geoff Annals	(~10 years)
Iris Webster	(3 years)
Sandy Lawson	(~30 years)
Tanya Duncan	(~10 years)

## Current BGI staff are:

Alice Khaw	(3 years)
Casey James	(3 years)
Dave Adams	(2 years)
Donna Redmond	(1 year)
Duncan Reid	(1 year)
Grant Clark	(6 years)
Jacinta Krefft	(10 years)
Jahnelle Wright	(2 years)
Katie Dowthwaite	(2 years)
Makere Derbyshire	(1 year)
Nga Larsen	(4 years)
Rod Baxter	(10 years)
Ross Davis	(10 years)
Sean Mullin	(1 year)
Young Young	(6 years)
Zoë Henderson	(1 year)

*"The Journey has changed my life. I have stopped my life of crime and drinking excessively, and I now have a job"*

– The Journey graduate

*"My son doesn't get so angry anymore. His teacher is really happy with the way he is doing at school too"*

– Challenge for Change parent

*"It has made me realise there is so much good and so much potential in every person, you just have to find a way to bring it out! Already the whole experience has taught me a way of looking at everyone around me"*

–Challenge for Change mentor

**Casey James**

# Report on General Assembly 2012

4 – 7 October 2012

Attending General Assembly at Rotorua for St John's was useful and enjoyable experience.

There were many highlights. The opening on the Ohope Marae in the Bay of Plenty was well managed and in a fitting setting, given the Assembly was hosted by both Te Aka Puaho (The Maori Synod) and the Kaimai Presbytery. Worship times benefited from the talented band led by Malcolm Gordon, including Sophie Macauley.

There were exciting stories of success in mission. For example, St Andrews, Invercargill, from being down to 12 elderly members set out in outreach to hear children's reading in schools, which led to an infusion of younger families and rejuvenation of the Church. Pastor Tim Keel of the Jacob's Well Church in Kansas provided four inspirational sessions, emphasising the need to think in completely fresh ways about mission. Themes such as Exodus, Exile, and time in the wilderness forcing a fresh way of thinking about the Church's came through.

It was also good to meet our Myanmar Church visitors.

A real highlight was when the incoming Moderator, Andrew Norton, reported back for the church's Press Go mission development initiative, and asked for a representative of St John's to stand to hear the applause of Assembly for the \$300,000 we have pledged to Knox-Waitara to support its outreach. I heard many very positive comments about this.

Up to one day's business was spent discussing sexuality notices of motion. Motions seeking to repeal the prohibition on sexual relationships outside marriage, or related positions, such as supporting bills to legalise gay marriage, were typically

declined by majorities ranging from 64% to over 75%. Generally this discussion was carried out in a good spirit. It maintained the positions of earlier Assemblies.

Assembly has sent down for study by Presbyteries and Congregations a proposal that will require 10% of all property sold by parishes to go into a Mission Enterprise Fund, from which 10% will be allocated to Te Aka Puaho; 20% to a Taonga building fund for a limited number of nationally important buildings; and 70% to Press Go. St John's needs to take a close interest.

The Maori presence, through Te Aka Puaho, was very strong at Assembly. It is developing its outreach, and has been working to develop children's ministry. Te Aka Puaho presented a motion calling for the Moderator of Te Aka Puaho to be accorded equal status to the Moderator of General Assembly in future. This is now sent for study. Te Aka Puaho also called for parishes to engage with local Iwi about the return of land to them by the Presbyterian Church throughout New Zealand.

Assembly decided that General Assemblies would remain biennial.

The Kupu Whakapono (New Zealand statement of faith) and commentary were acknowledged as subordinate standards of the Church, together with the Westminster Confession and the larger and shorter catechisms.

The Pacific Islands Synod was granted the status of a Presbytery.

The cross-cultural nature of the Church was also recognised. Apart from Pacific Islands congregations from 5 different ethnic groups, we now have a Taiwanese congregation and 26 Korean congregations now.

There will continue to be expectations for

# Messenger From 1944

Not long ago, the church received a letter from a Mrs Joan Rutherford living in Roanoke, Virginia. Mrs Rutherford was a war bride. Her husband had served with the American forces in the Pacific, and for a time was based in Wellington. When he returned to the United States with his Kiwi bride, Mr Rutherford trained for the ministry and became a priest in the Episcopal Church. While sorting out her late husband's papers Mrs Rutherford came across a St John's Messenger which she thoughtfully posted to us. Her husband must have picked it up during a visit to St John's in 1944 for; "close on two years we have had a number of American Marines worshipping with us at nearly every service. Some...attended St John's regularly and we came to know them well."

This particular Messenger is a special overseas edition. It is written specifically for those in the congregation who were overseas serving in the armed forces so they would

be; 'kept informed of all the doings and general nature about St John's.' The Messenger includes many extracts of letters written by St John's members. They make fascinating reading. Many of the writers wistfully recall their days in the Bible class and its associated sporting and social activities. They tell of fleeting meetings with other 'St John's boys.' An extract from a Captain Fletcher writing from Italy is typical. 'A brief note to thank you most heartily for the very excellent cake which arrived yesterday, also for the textbook and paper. It does make a difference to life when one realizes that one's church has not forgotten one. Please give my regards to the Rev. Hughes.'

Sadly, the Messenger also lists those 'St John's boys', who had recently been killed in action. Among the names is Hywel Hughes, son of the Minister, the Rev. Gladstone Hughes.

**Rob Anderson**

presbyteries to amalgamate into larger regional groupings.

Presbyteries must appoint commissions to review the future of a congregation where attendance falls below 40 for 12 months.

Church meetings will remain unable to take postal votes – it was felt important that people be there to hear the debate to make decisions.

Assembly also acknowledged the work of Blair Rogers and Ken Orange in memorial minutes as well as the 60th anniversary of Denzil Brown's ordination, coming up in 2014.

**David Galt**

## Congratulations

We extend congratulations to the following on their achievements:

Allister and Naomi on their new daughter Sarah

Eric Sidoti (Choir Leader) on his new son Ryker

Nga Larsen (Leader of Epic Youth Group) on her engagement to Elliott.

# What's happening at St. John's

## December

<b>2</b>	Advent begins
	Combined Advent Service at St Mary of the Angels 7.30pm
<b>3</b>	Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa Christmas Service
<b>5</b>	Session
<b>6</b>	Men's Prayer Breakfast
<b>7</b>	Wine and Theology
<b>9</b>	Quarterly Communion
	St John's Congregational Forum
	Final evening service
<b>12</b>	Communications Committee, Property Committee
<b>20</b>	Men's Prayer Breakfast
<b>24</b>	Christmas Eve Service 6.00pm
<b>25</b>	Christmas Day Service 10.00am

## January

<b>13</b>	Communion
<b>31</b>	Session Executive

## February

<b>6</b>	Session
<b>14</b>	Men's Prayer Breakfast
	High Tea with the Allister and Stuart
<b>9</b>	Communion
<b>13</b>	Communications Committee, Property Committee
<b>21</b>	ESL Study Group
<b>20</b>	Council
<b>26</b>	Women's Association
	Education Committee
<b>27</b>	Session Executive
<b>28</b>	Men's Prayer Breakfast



*Merry Christmas  
from St John's in the City*

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Views expressed in The Messenger do not necessarily reflect those of St John's in the City.