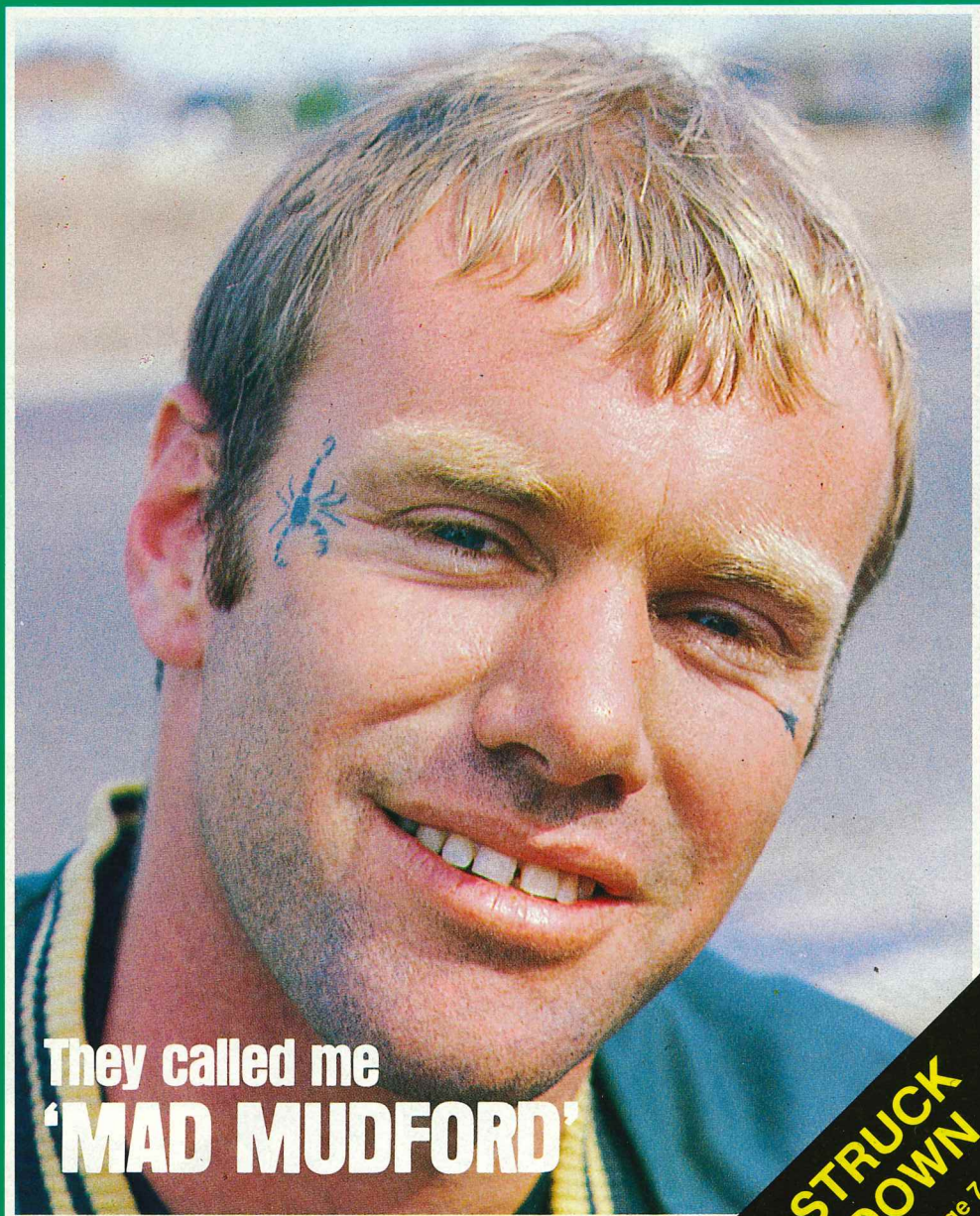


SOUTH PACIFIC
VOICE



They called me
'MAD MUDFORD'

**STRUCK
DOWN**
Page 7



Jozef Lottand

DISASTER!

Rasik Ranchord, Wellington

A terrible scraping sound jolted me awake from my ship's bunk.

At first I had no idea anything was wrong but then I heard people talking in the corridor.

"We're aground," someone said. Then a voice came over the loudspeaker: "The ship has struck a reef. Please put on your life jackets and report to the deck."

As I made my way down the narrow corridor to the stairway up to the deck I started praying.

Suddenly there was a massive jolt.

As I reached the lounge I heard a howling wind. Outside it was misty with very poor visibility. The sea was an angry surging mass. I realised that the conditions were bad even for notorious Wellington harbour.

Gradually the rest of the passengers made their way into the lounge. No one was talking. People just sat silently. There was an uneasy quiet. The New Zealand inter-island ferry Wahine was only hours away from its tragic end on April 10th, 1968.



I was a young man from Christchurch and was travelling on the Wahine on its regular scheduled run to Wellington to be at my brother's wedding.

We waited a long time in the lounge but finally at lunch time the loudspeakers came on again. It was the ship's captain, confirming that the ferry had come off the reef. He had sent for tugs from Wellington harbour and they would be arriving shortly.

People began to chatter again. Things seemed to be looking up.

The tugs arrived within an hour and the line was made fast to the Wahine but it kept snapping as the tugs tried to tow the ship away from Barretts Reef where it had stuck.

The grounding in the morning fog had left a hole in the hull of the Wahine and water was pouring in. The ship had a bad list and began to rock as more water rushed into the hold. The rocking turned into a slow rolling. There were two violent lurches and with the third one the ship listed heavily.

People were being thrown around violently. They were lying in heaps around me. As I gripped the edge of a table to steady myself I began to experience a tremendous sense of peace flooding over me. I had no fear. My pulse was normal. It seemed that there was an invisible shield around me, protecting me from the chaos and confusion.

I knew it was the peace of God that is beyond understanding.

Suddenly the lights dimmed, then went black, then came on again feebly. We could hear a crashing sound from below decks where the passengers' cars were colliding as the ship rolled.

One of New Zealand's worst maritime disasters was about to take place, and as a man who claimed to be a follower of Jesus Christ my Christian faith was about to receive its toughest test.

That faith became real to me in 1962, several years after I came to New Zealand from my homeland of Fiji. I had been raised a Hindu and as I came to NZ and was confronted with the Christian faith I found it easy to incorporate the claims of Jesus Christ into my own religion.

Hinduism is a religion that encompasses many gods and many ways. Therefore, I thought that Jesus Christ could be a possibility, one way among many.

I completed a bachelor's degree in commerce but as I contemplated starting work as an accountant I felt dissatisfied. There was an aching void inside me — my life seemed to be going nowhere.

One day I met a Christian man and we started talking about the things of God and Jesus Christ. He told me how he had had three strokes that left half his body paralyzed. His condition got so bad that he said he felt as though he had only a flicker of life left in him.

But he found comfort in prayer and reading scriptures from the Bible. He said he exercised his faith and was healed through the power of prayer.

This intrigued me because although I knew about the things God had done in history I did not know there was a God of miracles today. But here I was face to face with someone who had seen a miracle and experienced a miracle for himself. I could see that his life had direction.

Anxious that I should meet with more Christians the man gave me the address of a friend of his in Christchurch. When I got there I contacted the man. He invited me to a church service at a Pentecostal church.

I was wary. I had heard things about these people and my mind was filled with thoughts —“Rasik, watch out!”

As I continued to attend the church, I began to see an unusual genuineness about the people that were there in the way that they seemed to love their Jesus. They talked openly about Him in a way that I had not heard other Christians talk before. It seemed real, it was not put on.

At first I was suspicious but as the weeks went on I opened up more to these people. Then one evening at the end of an inspiring and heartfelt message the minister made an appeal for those people who wanted to give their lives to Jesus Christ to come forward to the front of the meeting. Something about his words seemed to strike me right through the heart.

I was filled with a hunger to find out whether Christianity was true. “Can Christ be the only way?” I asked myself. I decided to study the great religions of the world to try to establish in my intellect as well as my spirit that Christianity was indeed the only way to God. I went to the Christchurch Public Library and started to spend most of my free hours reading through books on great world religions including my native Hinduism.

Soon I began to feel as though I was being bogged down in religions, philosophies, and

thoughts. Through it all some words which I heard from the Bible at church kept haunting me: “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”.

I also had the feeling that I would only find the answers I wanted and the spiritual satisfaction I craved by deliberately committing myself to Jesus as my Creator and Lord. The implications of that sort of commitment made me uneasy. “This is intellectual suicide,” I thought. I tried to shut such thoughts out of my mind.

But the spiritual power of those words was drawing me like a magnet. I soon stopped looking into other religions and started reading more of the Bible. As I read, my hunger for the truth increased but it was being fed.

The Scriptures were becoming more real to me every day. Finally I decided to abandon my intellectual pride and in simple faith asked Jesus to reveal the depth and breadth of who He was to me by coming in and taking over my life. My search was over and at last I had found myself through finding Him.

As I stood on the deck of the Wahine among people who were silent and scared I was filled with a peace I could not understand, but which I knew came from God.

The captain's voice came over the loudspeaker again: “Women and children report to the lower deck and prepare to board the life rafts”.

I looked around at the men who were left up in the lounge with me. They were not talking. As I looked into their eyes their pupils were dilated like those of a cat at night —filled with fear.

I was in one of the last groups of

*Rasik Ranchord is pastor
at the Abundant Life Centre
in Wellington.*



people to get off the ship. Fifteen of us were in the rubber dinghy that was winched from the Wahine.

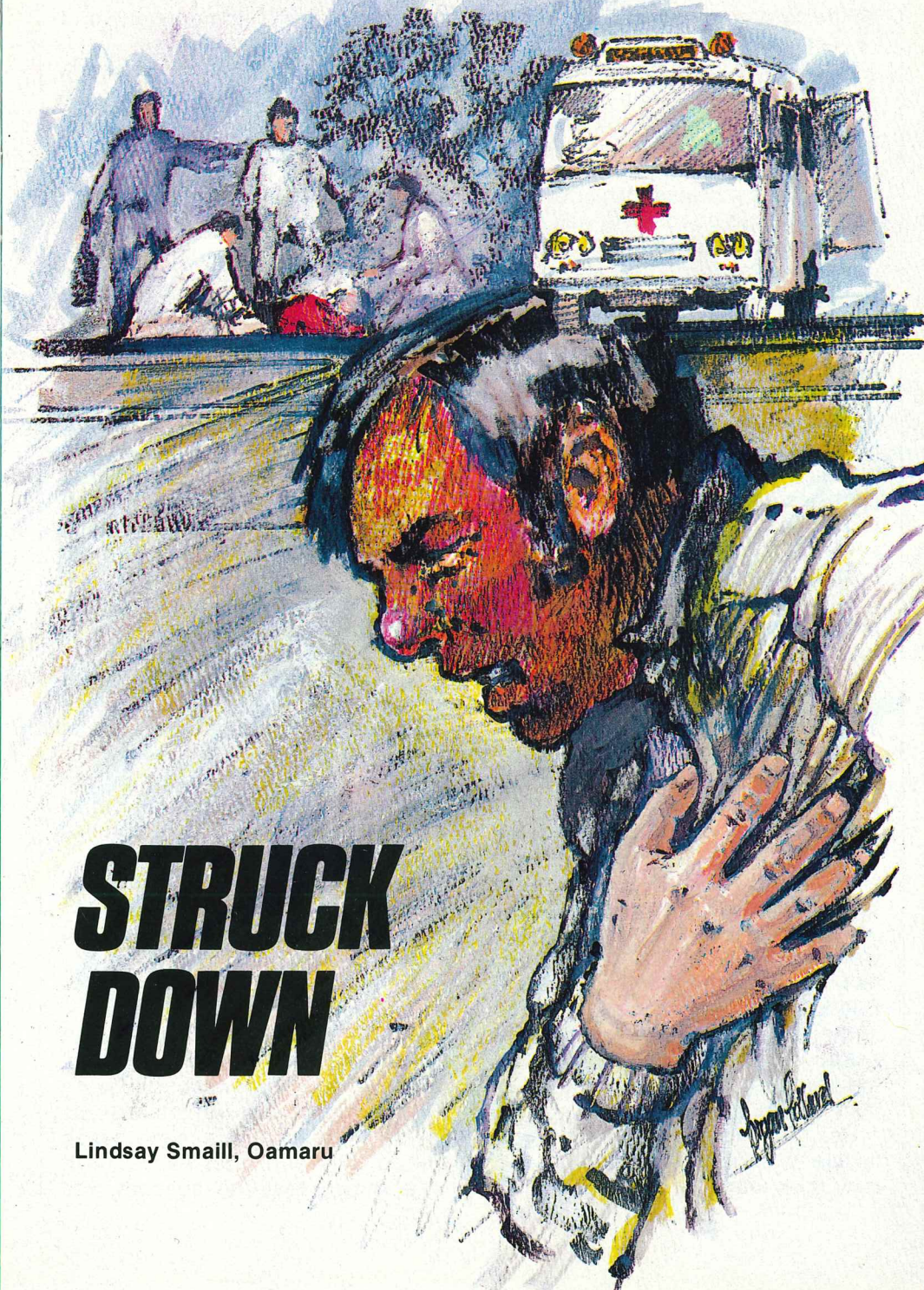
We started to drift away from the stricken ship. The wind had died down but the seas were still mountainous. What we were to find out later was that we were in the greatest danger not on the ship but when we were in the dinghies. Fifty-one people died in the Wahine disaster and virtually all of them were killed when their dinghies or lifeboats struck barely submerged rocks and capsized, drowning most of the passengers.

On our dinghy someone said "Let's sing something". We started singing the song "The Lord is my Shepherd". That kept our spirits up as we drifted endlessly.

We seemed to be in the water for hours but finally our dinghy was washed ashore at Eastbourne, a spot on the other side of the harbour from the reef which the Wahine struck. We waded ashore safe and well. Relief workers were ready in a nearby hall with blankets and warm cups of tea for the survivors from the many dinghies that were drifting ashore at Eastbourne.

When we looked back we saw for the first time the full extent of the carnage. Bodies were being washed ashore, many badly mutilated. The sense of tragedy was still with me when my relatives picked me up from the Wellington Railway Station shortly afterward.

The Wahine disaster was an experience almost too much for words. But through it all I knew the presence of God. Perhaps this story will show to you that Jesus is real and that His warmth is close in the darkest of times. □



STRUCK DOWN

Lindsay Smail, Oamaru

Lindsay Smail

The pain in my chest came on so suddenly that I collapsed.

I was alone in a house in Gympie, Australia after sending my family home to New Zealand. My plan was to sell our house there and follow them over.

But it was now a month after they had gone and suddenly I was lying on the floor burning with pain. I crawled to my front door and called out to my neighbour. He called the local doctor and shortly an ambulance was screaming its way to help me.

Because the hospital was too far away the doctors told me to stay at home and not do anything but just to say in bed. It was like hell. I lay in bed for three days and couldn't eat any food. The moment I tried to eat something I vomited it up.

My neighbours left me alone apart from one who brought me a drink of flat lemonade, an old bush remedy that he said would help me.

After three days passed I was well enough to start my work as a railway shunter again.

Three months later a nun from the Brisbane hospital that had my X-ray phoned me up. She told me she had found a large shadow around my heart on the X-ray picture and wanted me to come down to Brisbane straight away.

I told her it was impossible — I had work to do. I had to send money back to my family in New Zealand. But the next day she phoned me again and she told me about the shadow and said that the doctors were worried about it. They wanted me to come down urgently.

Reluctantly, I agreed. It was a real hassle. I went to the hospital and they took more X-rays. They said I

needed surgery immediately and they were ready to admit me.

I went home and started packing. For some reason I put in my suitcase a small Bible which I found on a bookcase in the house. I don't know why I took it, but I didn't like what I was about to face and knew that somehow it would give me some comfort.

No sooner had I got to the hospital than doctors and nurses crowded around me. They examined my chest carefully and later the X-rays revealed something which surprised even them. There was an abscess on my lungs about five inches in diameter. I had known for a long time that there was something wrong down there. I would cough for several hours after smoking. At the hospital they told me I had been very lucky.

That night I lay awake in my hospital bed contemplating what had happened to me. I reached out for the small Bible I had brought along and read through some passages. I knew I needed help and I knew that all I could do was pray.

"Dear God, if You can do anything, if You can get me out of this fix, I'll know and I will confess that You are real in my life".

I was kept under close observation. The doctors did not want to operate unless it was absolutely necessary because I would have to be opened up for twenty minutes with a real infection risk.

Over the next month they kept putting off the operation. Instead, what can only be described as a miracle happened with the abscess in my lungs. X-rays were taken periodically and after each one it was shown that the abscess was

getting smaller. Five weeks after going into hospital I was told that an operation would not be necessary and it wasn't long before I walked out of the hospital and went back to work.

It was clear to me that God had intervened in a dramatic way.

I had become a Christian during my teenage years in my home town of Oamaru. I was going to a large boys' boarding school there. Life at the school was hard for me. Because I was small I was often bullied and kicked around, but through it all I knew that I had a Father in Heaven who cared for me and this was a real comfort.

My family were godly people and they sent me along to Sunday School where I began to get to know God and His Son Jesus Christ. Throughout my teenage years I had a real desire to be a missionary. In fact the desire was such that the curate of a local church took me aside for special teaching because of it.

However, when I left school the need to have a job and a trade in the world took precedence. I spent five years in a painting and decorating apprenticeship and the working world took its toll upon my love for the Lord. I ignored Christ and I left my church as well.

After my apprenticeship I joined the army at the age of 20. I was attracted by the discipline and the prospect of some excitement in the field of battle. I spent 10 months training at the Burnham Military Camp near Christchurch and from there I was posted to Malaysia as an infantryman in the Malacca Garrison.

It was the time of the Malaysian

emergency and I was to spend 18 months in the garrison. There was real upheaval in the land at that time. A relatively new country was going through violent birth pangs. There was strife and rioting amongst the people. However, I saw little action in my division which was on jungle patrol.

At the beginning of 1968 I was posted to South Vietnam to join in the small New Zealand infantry force which was establishing itself in the Vietnam war. Again our work was to patrol the battlefield, going over ground that had already been taken by advancing American forces.

It was dangerous in the jungles. Pockets of Vietcong guerrillas which had been missed by the advancing forces were still active.

Once I was involved in a battle incident from which what could only have been a divine hand rescued me. Our small patrol had been advancing along a stretch of bush land when suddenly a fusilade of shots rang out.

It was an ambush.

As always our attackers were like ghosts. They could not be seen in the dense undergrowth.

I dodged for cover beside a nearby tree and huddled there scared out of my wits. This was the type of war you fought in Vietnam. A war where your enemy would strike when you least expected it.

As I huddled beside the tree keeping my head down away from the shots which criss-crossed in the air above something prompted me to move.

"Get away," I thought.

I moved only about 20 metres or so before a mortar crashed into the

base of the tree. It exploded leaving only a gaping crater where I had earlier been huddled. I was still alive though I knew I should be dead.

Several times similar things happened. I would be in a position, have a prompting to move and then see that position wiped out. The Vietcong were armed with deadly Russian AK47 weapons. More than once I slipped away from a place before it was peppered by this gunfire.

I served in Vietnam only in 1968 and was posted back to Burnham at the end of that year. I came through Vietnam with only a minor nick in my arm from a bullet, but the whole experience was no picnic. The tension and the constant patrolling in the dangerous jungles put a strain on me which no doubt had something to do with the decision of my commanding officers to send me back to New Zealand.

My task in the platoons which patrolled the jungles was a marksman, a field in which I had received training. I was usually the last man in the patrol bringing up the rear, a position of real danger. I learned to walk backwards for many miles watching out in case there were attackers seeking to pick off the last people in a patrol. Yet I thank God that in all my time there I never killed a man.

Back in New Zealand I started work again as a painter and decorator in Oamaru until 1973. Then, like so many New Zealanders seeking a bit of travel and adventure, I decided to go to Australia. I ended up doing a painting job in the bush of northern New South Wales. It was there that a plumber, a Christian man, started working with me.

He said without any shame that he was a Christian and we started talking a lot about God and Jesus Christ. Up till then I had virtually given away thoughts of God. My experiences on the battlefield were now dim memories and I put my escapes down to good fortune rather than what I now know was a divine hand.

As we talked a lot of things started coming back to me from my school days — promises I had made and my intense desire to serve God. A lot of the things my plumber friend said shook me up. He talked about how we are in the end times and the return of Christ may come in the next century. I knew God was calling me but I was not prepared to make a real stand and get back to the strong relationship I once had with Him.

It was the beginning of 1973 when I first went to Gympie as a hotel manager. One day a girl came into the bar looking for a job. I knew we had virtually nothing to offer but something about her struck me and I managed to find her some part time work. We seemed to hit it off together and it wasn't long before Rosalyn and I got married.

In 1976 I brought my wife and, by then, small family home to Oamaru for a holiday. Rosalyn liked the place very much and suggested that we come back and live here permanently because I was a NZ citizen.

When we returned to Australia to my job at Gympie on the railways we found that Government moves spelt redundancy for me in the near future. The railway was being electrified and many of the workers would no longer be needed on the new modern lines. We decided to

make the move to New Zealand. I sent my wife and three children ahead to Oamaru and waited in Gympie while our house was on the market.

Near the railway yards where I worked was the Gympie Assembly of God church. They were a very enthusiastic lot, unlike the respectable silent people I had often struck in the churches. My work required me to be down at the yards on Sunday and often I would sit there and hear the praise and the singing from that church as it drifted out across the town. I used to ridicule them as a bunch of mindless Bible bashers, but no doubt that exposure to the sort of joy that Christ can bring did a lot to remind me of God when I was in hospital with my abscess shortly afterwards.

When I came out from the hospital there remained the problem of selling the house. It was in a difficult area and buyers were few and far between. Often people would give me good indications that they wanted to buy and then let me down at the last minute.

But in hospital I had learned the power of prayer and so each day I prayed that God would help me to sell it.

One day a lady came in and said she would buy the house and gave me a \$5000 deposit straight away. It was an answer to prayer. I took the money and flew home to Oamaru to rejoin my family.

God has had to do a lot to bring me back to him. I had known Him and loved Him as a teenager but the worries and pressures of life gradually choked my faith and I gave up on God.

Thankfully, God does not give up

on us! He will rescue us from the direst situations if we call out to Him. □





If ever a man could claim to have been given a new start in life, Kevin Mudford is that man.

Prisons couldn't change him. Psychiatric hospitals couldn't cure him. It took the gentle power of Jesus to do for Kevin what institutions had failed to do.

His friends once thought he was mad. The authorities thought he should be put away. But the love of God reached in to Kevin's life and made him ...

A Free Man

Kevin Mudford, Hastings

Thirty government institutions in 13 years. That about sums up my life.

Borstals, drug abuse centres, psychiatric hospitals, prisons — you name them, I've been there. I was one of society's misfits and there was no place for me but prison cells and hospital wards.

People told me I was beyond help so many times that I gave up on myself and accepted the hopeless cycle of prison to freedom to crime and back to prison again.

My name is on the record books of institutions from Porirua's psychiatric hospital in Wellington to New Zealand's maximum security prison at Paremoremo.

It has only been in the last year that I have been able to break the cycle of crime and mental disturbance that began with my first

arrest at the age of 13.

I was born and raised in Napier and our family was one of those ones that all of society just seems to shake its head over.

Our homelife was traumatic. My father was a heavy drinker and I would often go to sleep at night with the sounds of violence as he beat my mother after a drinking binge.

At the age of six I contracted meningitis. Though this disease often proves fatal I suppose I was lucky because I lost only the hearing in one of my ears.

Though the health results of my deafness were not too bad it started to have a bad effect on my schooling. Violence had been bred into me from my hectic home life and it spilled out in the schoolyard where I lived by the law of fist and boot.

In the classroom my partial

deafness resulted in poor concentration and I seemed to get very little out of the lessons. Instead I made it my business to disrupt the proceedings as much as I could.

At the age of nine the education authorities were at their wits' end as to what to do with me, so the Department of Social Welfare stepped in and I was sent for a two-month stay at a department home in Gisborne.

From that point I gave school up as a joke and after coming back home from Gisborne spent more time wagging than attending.

Mad Mudford

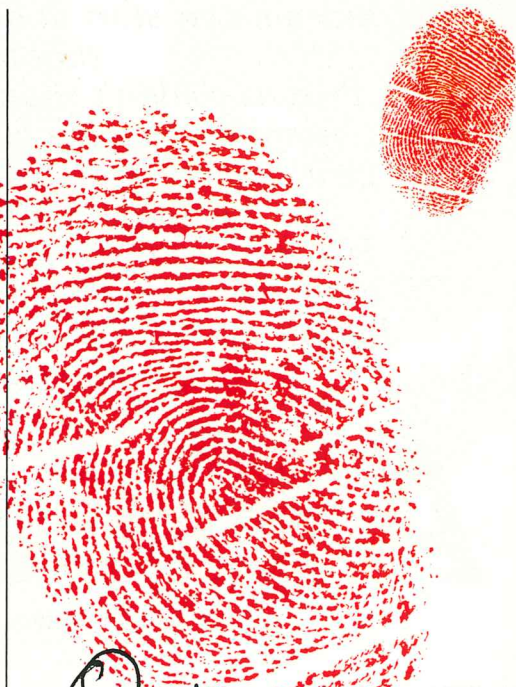
It was not long before I joined up with the groups of street kids that roamed around Napier. They committed petty crimes like vandalism and small burglaries just for the fun of it and to ease the boredom of their aimless lives.

We were a nuisance to the police who would constantly pick us up off the streets and take us home or to the police station for a good telling off. I was only 11 but already I was drinking and smoking as much as grown men.

Behind the tough exterior, though, I was a hurting little boy. My parents had rejected me and in turn I rejected society. Vandalism and antisocial behaviour were a vent for the anger and resentment I felt inside of me.

I was too mixed up even for my tough street friends who teased me and called me "Mad Mudford".

At 13 I started breaking into houses. Sunday night was a favourite time because the streets were really dead and the shops were often badly secured. I used my head in these crimes and often got away



One time I was
stupid enough
to leave a set
of fingerprints.
Of course the
cops picked
me up.
Bummer!



with a lot but one time that year I was stupid enough to leave a good set of fingerprints which the police used to pick me up.

I was packed off to Napier's Epuni Boys Home but after three months I was back on the streets unchanged. Society had shut me away and I wanted to get my own back by being as bad as I could.

Again that year I was caught in crime but because I was so young I could not be sent to prison, so it was off to another boys home, this time at Taradale near Hastings.

This time it was for eight months but no amount of threatening and discipline could change me inside. For a time I would toe the line because I was afraid of discipline but as soon as I was out and free again I would go back to my old ways.

I shuttled back and forth to institutions through my teens and finished out those years in borstal at Invercargill. While I was there I began to be exposed to some Christian groups who made regular preaching visits to the borstal. There was usually nothing better to do so I went along to their meetings to break the monotony.

God meant nothing to me. Jesus Christ seemed totally foreign to me. I could not think of anyone wanting to love me for who I was. Besides I was too bad for anyone to possibly love me — people had told me that.

As well as crime I would go all out for any thrill I could get. My drugs and drinking habit convinced the authorities I was in need of psychiatric help, so in 1977 they decided to try some heavy treatment by sending me to Porirua. Part of the reason for my admission was that I

was starting to endanger myself as well as others. One night I had gone on a boozing spree and settled down to sleep in an industrial concrete mixer. Luckily some workers found me the next day before filling the mixer. I could have been suffocated.

I liked the treatment at Porirua. For the first time someone was paid to care for me and at last I was getting the sort of attention I had craved since I was a child. Unfortunately it didn't have a lasting effect.

Assault

Early in 1978 I assaulted a policeman who was threatening me in one of my drunken moods. No nice mental hospitals for me this time — Mount Crawford Prison in Wellington was my next bit of "free board and lodging courtesy of Her Majesty".

They let me work on the prison farm and somehow I managed to get hold of some whisky. My mind was so warped at this time that I tried to get a high from drinking the stuff and eating poisoned mushrooms. I nearly killed myself and for the first time I realised that if I didn't get some sort of positive help I would probably end up dead. I went to talk to the prison chaplain because I knew he would be nice to me. He got me referred to the National Society for Alcohol and Drug Abuse's centre at Hanmer Springs in Canterbury.

Two months of treatment there did little good for me and I was referred for some intensive treatment at a halfway house for reforming drug addicts and alcoholics in Dunedin. They were nice, caring people there but it was not long before I found where they kept the hard drugs. I was caught getting

stuck into the drug cabinet one night and the exasperated authorities decided to try desperate measures.

This time it was the psychiatric unit of Kew Hospital in Invercargill where I was kept under heavy drugged sedation. But I was too much of a drain on the hospital so they packed me off to Otago's security mental institution — Cherry Farm near Dunedin.

By the end of 1981 I was in Auckland's infamous Oakley Hospital, a hopeless case beyond help. It was only a matter of time before I would be sent to New Zealand's toughest mental hospital, Lake Ellis in the Manawatu, which looks after the maximum security patients.

Divinely powerful

It was around this time that something divinely powerful started to happen that was eventually to break the cycle of crime and institutions that had been with me all my adult years.

My brother Michael had followed me into a life of crime from an early age. He was as bad as me and I knew that if anything could change him it could change me.

At the end of that year I received a letter from Michael, who was in Napier at this time. I thought it would be news of the latest trouble he was in and the new institution address for his letters.

Instead, he told me he had become a Christian. I was thunderstruck. If God could crack his destructive life cycle then I knew there was hope for me. A flicker of light began to appear at the end of the dark tunnel that was my life and I was determined to follow it.

When I was released from Oakley I

went straight down to Napier to see the "new" Michael. Mike's wife had always hated me and thought I was just a good-for-nothing that her husband should see as little of as possible. But as I came to their home this time she ran out and hugged me. Both of them were Christians and as I stayed with them I saw that Mike really had changed.

They gave me a loving environment to live in for a time which seemed to stabilise me. For once I was not out on my own in a cold hard world and because I had really been down to the pits in my life I actually started to lose the desire for crime. Besides, I knew what would happen the next time I was put away — it would be for a long stretch.

Michael and his wife went along to the local Apostolic Church. I was only too happy to go with them when they invited me along. The people in the church welcomed me into their midst and I was accepted and treated kindly by Mike's friends who were also Christians.

All the time the hope that had been started in me was being constantly reinforced to the point where I was ready to believe Jesus Christ would actually accept me if I wanted to do the same thing that Mike and his wife had done.

Nothing to lose

I really had nothing to lose and everything to gain. My life would probably go off the deep end if I got into trouble again while at the same time Christ was holding out so much joy to me — inviting me to take it.

In November of 1982 I was at a regular evening service with Mike when I decided that this was the time. The speaker made an invitation at the end of his message

for those people who wanted to give their lives to Jesus to come forward and stand in front of all the congregation.

It was a big thing for me to do because, like most people, I just hated standing out in a crowd. Gritting my teeth, I stood up and walked forward.

That night as I invited Jesus to come into my life and take over it was like turning the clock back over the years I had wasted in crime and anger. I felt God erasing the guilt and hopelessness and filling me with a sense of peace and love — the love I had never found as a child.

Sometimes when people become Christians they slip back into their old ways because the past has a powerful hold on them. My past nearly killed me, so for me the choice was clear — Jesus or death.

When I was 17 and doing my first stint of borstal at Waikeria I would often lie in my cell thinking about a piece of graffiti on the wall, scrawled there by someone in a moment of profound perception: "I will not live in a world without love!"

It took a special move by God to show me that His love was available for all people — even ones like me who had treated Him and other people with contempt and hatred. Now there really is nothing else worthwhile in my life apart from Jesus. Several times recently I have been to prisons to share my story with the inmates, many of whom are probably locked into the same cycle of crime that I was. I have told them life for me now is one of no compromise in following the Lord.

All through my twisted life I sought to live in a world of real love.

At last I have found that world. □





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KAIKOHE	181X KHO	850 KHO
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<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 38.117</i>		
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AUCKLAND CENTRAL	500.825	734.886
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MOUNT ALBERT	864.162	866.619
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<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 57862 or 59988 Hamilton</i>		
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ROTORUA	86.511	477.198
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LEVIN	86.629	87.127
MASTERTON	69.294	49.037
PALMERSTON NORTH	69.593	73.616
ROSE CITY	88.890	71.168
SANSON	723 Rongotea	724 Sanson
<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 292.766 P.N.</i>		
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STRATFORD	6472	6604
<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 33.693</i>		
WELLINGTON		
LOWER HUTT	696.784	697.966
MAJESTIC	696.641	674.907
UPPER HUTT	277.290	284.936
WAINUIOMATA	648.255	647.870
WELLINGTON CENTRAL	663.140	883.531

WELLINGTON —		
WESTERN COASTAL	359.628	
<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 696.641</i>		
TOP OF THE SOUTH		
BLENHEIM	88.898	89.815
GREYMOUTH	7777	6210
NELSON		7482 RD
PICTON	115R	705
<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 7777 Collect</i>		
CHRISTCHURCH/NORTH CANTERBURY		
CHRISTCHURCH CENT.	524.021	324.664
CHRISTCHURCH N.E.	559.684	856.145
CHRISTCHURCH N.W.	238.077	584.900
CHRISTCHURCH SOUTH	843.734	885.708
HORNBY	498.591	482.049 ext 617
HURUNUI	841 Omihi	48.592 Amberley
KAIAPOI	8713	
KAIKOURA	715	706
OXFORD	24086 Ox	832 Cust
RICCARTON	41850	
<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 559.684 or 429.028</i>		
SOUTH CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO		
ASHBURTON	21.804	7957
MACKENZIE	712	8256
NORTH OTAGO	29.572	71.384
TIMARU	61.683	61.869
WAIMATE	WIO 828	8357 WIO
<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 8222</i>		
OTAGO/SOUTHLAND		
BALCLUTHA	82.892	81.104
CROMWELL	805 Tarras	50.747
DUNEDIN	761.481	876.333
GORE	42.239	763 Puk
INVERCARGILL	86.538	82.750
LAWRENCE	128D	25
QUEENSTOWN	884 Arrowtown	
WINTON	544 CB	692
<i>FIELD REPRESENTATIVE 945 (Q'Town)</i>		

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CURSED!

I wondered what was happening to me, when two awful nightmares came true.

In the first dream I was driving my truck to work when a car pulled out in front of me from the left. I jammed on the brakes but they failed and I crashed straight into a power pole as the truck jack-knifed.

Two weeks later that accident became reality — exactly as the dream had shown!

Then I had a second dream. This time I was driving myself and five friends to a hotel when I rolled the car over a bank. Again it happened just as the dream had shown, but with an eerie difference.

In the dream I had seen a figure standing on the roadside with his arms stretched toward me, beckoning me to come over to where he was standing. As I crawled from the wreckage resting at the bottom of the bank I saw the figure again. I did not realise who it was until later when something better than a dream changed my life for good.

As a child my life was pretty messed up. I started off never knowing a father, and because my mother was unable to cope I was bundled off onto my grandparents, who tried their best until Social Welfare stepped in.

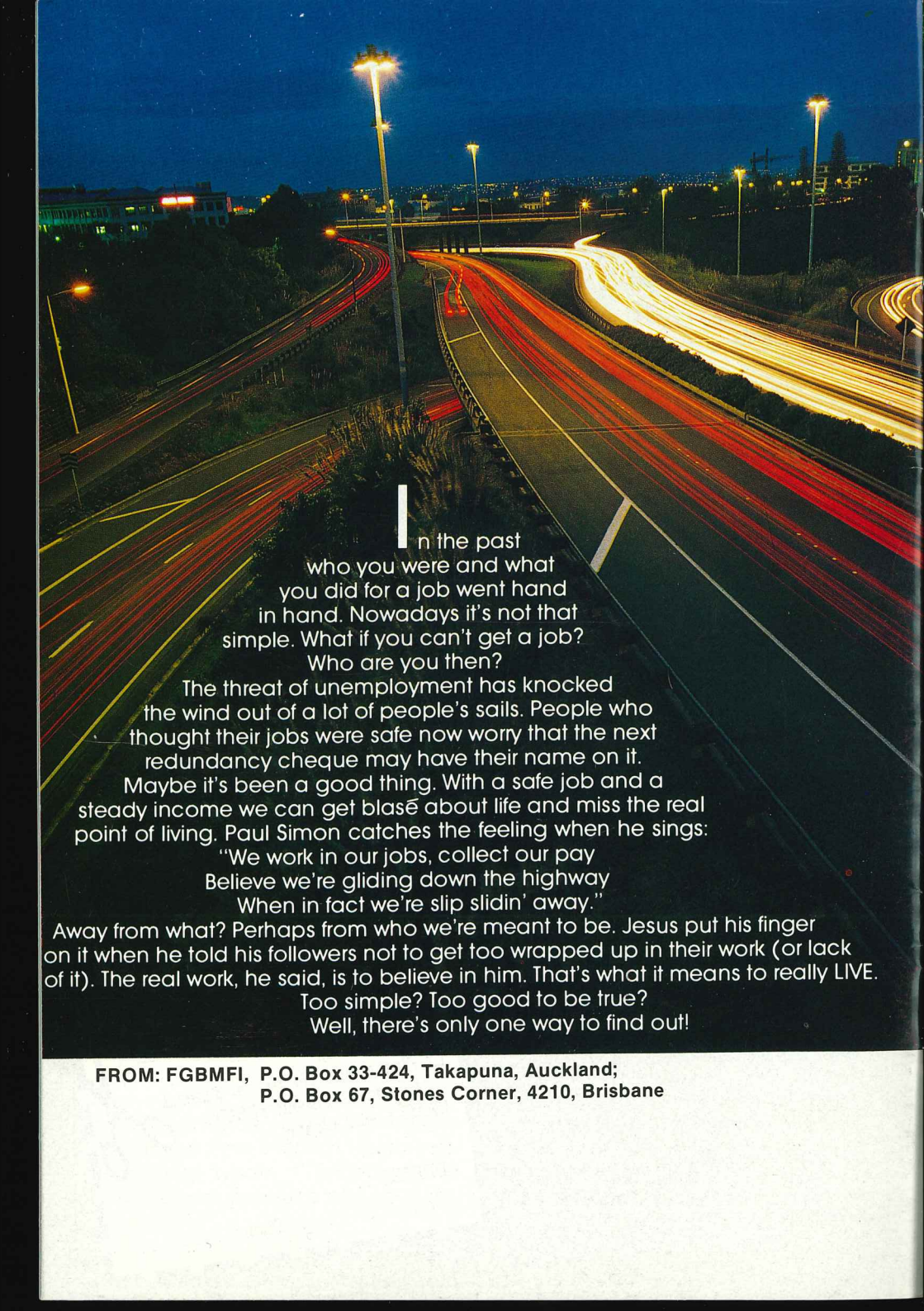
I recall the bitterness, hurt and loneliness I felt when in the courthouse at the age of eight my family rejected me and I was made a ward of the state and shunted off to a Social Welfare Home. That was just the start of a circuit of foster homes, as I drifted from one set of parents to another.

My bitterness soon turned to rebellion and I made a vow that someone would pay for what happened. I became a loner and was out to take what I could, any way I could get it.

I wanted nothing more to do with my family who had so cruelly rejected me.

At the age of 15 I lived in Masterton with a family by the name of Thompson until the age of 17, when they adopted me. I began to feel loved for the first time in my life but when I was 18 Mr Thompson passed away and this started a decline in my life once again.

Not ever knowing what true love really was I found myself entangled in a sordid affair with my stepmother which screwed my life up completely. For six years I lived like a fly caught up in a deadly web of sin, never able to free myself of the guilt and shame which I wore like a chain around my neck. I wanted out,



In the past
who you were and what
you did for a job went hand
in hand. Nowadays it's not that
simple. What if you can't get a job?
Who are you then?

The threat of unemployment has knocked
the wind out of a lot of people's sails. People who
thought their jobs were safe now worry that the next
redundancy cheque may have their name on it.
Maybe it's been a good thing. With a safe job and a
steady income we can get blasé about life and miss the real
point of living. Paul Simon catches the feeling when he sings:

"We work in our jobs, collect our pay
Believe we're gliding down the highway
When in fact we're slip slidin' away."

Away from what? Perhaps from who we're meant to be. Jesus put his finger
on it when he told his followers not to get too wrapped up in their work (or lack
of it). The real work, he said, is to believe in him. That's what it means to really LIVE.

Too simple? Too good to be true?

Well, there's only one way to find out!

**FROM: FGBMFI, P.O. Box 33-424, Takapuna, Auckland;
P.O. Box 67, Stones Corner, 4210, Brisbane**