



“Supporting Postal Bible Schools around the World” - 50 years - 1958 to 2008

Editor's Desk

Stephen Gillham



In this edition we look back through some of the activities of the past few months, look around at some of the current activities, and look forward to some of the plans for the future.

Looking back we have reports from the 50th Anniversary Meetings, the International Conference, and Looking around we have reports from Scotland, a recent visit to Romania, and also some recruiting methods in Northern Ireland. Looking forward we are thinking about ways that BES will be working this year and into the future.

Looking Back

Fiftieth Anniversary Celebrations were held in different places throughout the Autumn of 2008 three in Ireland and three in the UK. Each of these occasions was memorable. It was great to know that hundreds of believers from different parts of the country met to give thanks to the Lord for all that had happened during the last 50 years but also to encourage Bert and Wendy Gray in all that had been achieved through their vision and commitment over so many years. There are memories of the great numbers who gathered in Craigavon and in Cootehill which particularly will stay with us.



The choir made up of PBS students and camp leaders at the celebration in Craigavon.

In Cardiff it was good to have so many at the meeting who had been involved over the years in a variety of ways and it was possible to make a presentation to Bert and Wendy in recognition for all that they had done. David Tucker gave a powerful challenge for the work for the future. Other meetings were arranged in Harrogate, Swansea and Bandon, Co. Cork in the area of Ireland where the work began.

The whole year was climaxed by the Book Launch in Northern Ireland in Belfast – “Love Letters to the World” Noel Davidson had spent most of the year researching the story of PBS for the book which is a wonderful account of what has happened since the early days. The book ends with Noel's visit to the Craigavon Thanksgiving meeting and makes interesting reading.

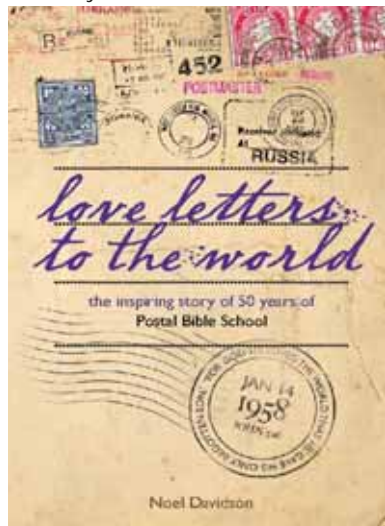
Books are available from Samuel Balmer, Stephen Gillham or Bert

Gray at the very special price of £10 including post.

A DVD of the Cardiff Thanksgiving meeting is also available from Bert Gray for £5 including post.

We are trusting that the book will inspire further interest in the work of Postal Bible School in this country and elsewhere and also inspire some people perhaps to commence a Postal Bible School Centre and reach out to children who are not studying the Word of God in any way at all. We have already heard of one couple in the USA who were inspired by the book and have already started a Postal Bible School Centre

We do hope that many readers of BES News will purchase a book and pass it around to as many as possible so that the message of Love Letters to the World will be widely known in many places.



“Love Letters to the World” - An account of the first 50 years of PBS.

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Looking Around

Scotland

It gives us pleasure to be able to add a long established work and a new work in Scotland to our list of PBS centres, although neither of them use the name Postal Bible School. We continue to use 'PBS' for clarity but are very happy to acknowledge that sometimes other names can be more acceptable. The friends in Scotland would value prayer for these two ventures and their efforts to increase the number of students doing PBS lessons.

Christine Pollard writes:-

We took over the small Highlands and Islands Postal Sunday School roughly in 1976/77 and gradually built it up over the years until we had in 1993 about 870 sets of lessons being produced. Originally they were produced by typing out a master of each lesson and then using a manual duplicator which was a very laborious task.

We split the lessons into more categories and added further Bible Class and Advanced Lessons and as it was being sent out to a wider area we re-named it the Scottish Postal Sunday School and Bible Class. We never actually knew how many people were completing the lessons as many of them were being sent to Sunday School Teachers etc. and being duplicated by them again.

My husband, Arthur kept regular contact with all of the pupils by visiting the Islands regularly and once a year, many of the pupils came to camp. Arthur's last issue of lessons went out two days before he died in September 2007. "He finished his course."

I decided to carry on the lessons by purchasing BES lessons and sending them out monthly with the help of Jean Stott, Elizabeth MacKenzie and Sarah MacKenzie. Most of the markers have been with us for years although we do have some new ones and all their help is greatly appreciated.

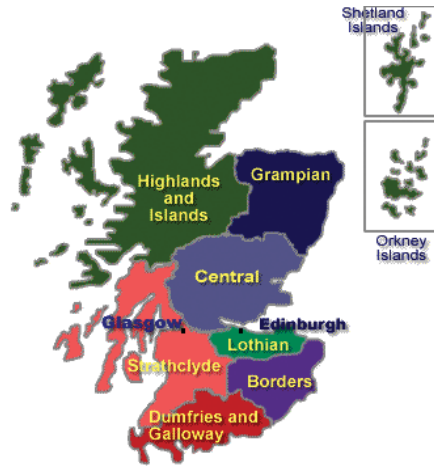
We have at the moment 14 markers and around 60 pupils, but this year we have had cards printed, advertising the lessons and will have them at the various Agricultural Shows and Bible Exhibitions. Anybody who would like to introduce children in Scotland to PBS lessons should contact Jean Stott

Contact details are: Jean Stott - 0771 5484934, jeanstott@btinternet.com

Paul Coxall writes:-

The PBS in the East of Scotland is called 'The Ultimate Adventure Club'. We are giving application forms to every schoolchild who visits the Aberdeenshire Bible Exhibition, as well as placing the forms in local churches. So far we have approximately 40 people on

the register, covering an area covering Grampian, Central and the Highlands and Islands.



The Ultimate Adventure Club has a special prize that can be won in 2009. Every person who completes and sends back 12 worksheets in 2009 will receive a copy of a book called "Stepping Stones". This is a book for young people and is full of Bible stories that follow the time-line of the Bible. It shows how God has dealt with people right from the creation of the world and even shows us a little of what God has said will happen in the future.

Contact details are: Paul Coxall - 01224 326795, paul_coxall@sky.com

Romania Visit, March '09

Report by Stephen Gillham

Bert Gray, Sam Balmer, Steve McDonald and Stephen Gillham were able to spend a week in Romania just recently. There were three main reasons for making this visit at this time.

Firstly, Steve McDonald was able to meet with the group in Oradea (Hungarian speaking Romania) and with the help of computer technicians start putting the Hungarian lessons on to our BES Website. He also was able to spend time with another group in Cluj (Romanian speaking) to start putting all the Romanian lessons on to the BES Website. This will mean that Hungarian and Romanian speaking children and young people around the world can access the lessons.

Secondly we had been asked, after the September Conference, to provide some

training for both the Oradea team and the Cluj team. We were able to do this dealing with subjects such as why work with children, marking of the PBS lessons, recruitment, communicating with children etc.

Thirdly on Saturday April 4th a celebration was arranged in Cluj to celebrate five years of the Romanian work where 40-50 people from all parts of Romania came to thank God for all He has done in Romania since the lessons were first translated. Mihaela Vals organised a great afternoon and evening. It was a real encouragement to see the enthusiasm of all those who were there and the commitment to reaching children in their own country.

It was my first visit to Romania and I was so encouraged by all that I saw. It was a real privilege to meet with Romanian Christians to see the vision that they have, to reach out and encourage and support them in any way that we could in the work that they are doing.



Mihaela & Tudor Vlas

Mihaela writes - First of all, it was a pleasure having you here for the few days and, although we are very aware of the big difference between our countries in almost everything, we all hope you had a good time here.

I am very thankful for the job you all did here and maybe you will feel encouraged to know that there are results (feeble, but still results). Thus, we have 2 new markers following the conference, some people who ensured us that the PBS work has entered their prayer list after the conference and also a big improvement in the comments of those who participated at the training on Friday evening. So, thank you so much!



Attendees of the conference in Cluj, Romania.

Looking Forward

The BES Trustees have been prayerfully seeking the Lord's guidance and wisdom for the future of the work, especially their priorities for the coming year.

We came to three conclusions:-

1. To encourage a much greater use of Bibletime lessons in our own country. BES now have presentation packs available for anyone who might be thinking of starting a Postal Bible School work, these are available from the Secretary.

2. To encourage the translation of the BES resources into other key languages. BES are actively seeking for partnerships in this work with those who share our vision. Certain language groups have been identified as a priority and we are endeavouring to research those language areas, for suitable partnerships.

3. To enable the completion of Phase 1 of the BES web site which would involve uploading lessons to the website which have already been translated, for example in Romanian, Hungarian, Czech, Polish etc.

As Trustees we are grateful to the Lord and to His people for their financial help during our financial year which has just concluded. Our 2009/10 budget has at present a considerable shortfall. We continue to depend on the Lord via His people, enabling us to fulfil our vision and work during this coming year. Further details on specific projects are available from the secretary Stephem Gillham or email info@besweb.org.



Language Analysis

...serving you to serve others...

In seeking to serve the worldwide body of Christ, helping and enabling them to serve others, Sam Balmer and David Tucker have prepared for BES a language analysis. This helps BES to fulfil its vision in facilitating the production of Bible Educational Resources in many of the world's languages.

Language is perhaps one of the most important functions of the human body - it allows us to get sustenance as a child, it allows us to get virtually anything we want as an adult, and it allows us many hours of entertainment through literature, radio, music, and films.

BES have produced the summary in the tables below as to where they are at present, and the potential of further development over the next 3 – 5 years.

From the tables we discover that Bibletime Lessons can currently be made available to

14.5% of the worlds population, and if Chinese (Mandarian) and Hindustani are translated this increases to 39%

Please join with us in prayer that the BES trustees will be guided by the Lord as to the future development of the Bibletime resource.

See "Serving you to Serve others" in the May edition of Echoes magazine. Also on www.echoes.org.uk/magazine.php

Mission Statement

Serving you to Serve others by producing for worldwide use, consecutive Bible lessons that enable teaching of the Word of God to the current and next generations.

Vision Statement

To facilitate the production of Bible Educational Resources in many of the world's languages, through various means of communication, in partnership with others who share our core values.

Table 1 - Top Ten Spoken Languages

		Nr of Speakers
Chinese mandarin	1	1,000,000,000
English	2	508,000,000
Hindustani (Hindi and Urdu)	3	497,000,000
Spanish	4	392,000,000
Russian	5	277,000,000
Arabic	6	246,000,000
Bengali	7	211,000,000
Portugesse	8	191,000,000
Malay – Indonesian	9	159,000,000
French	10	129,000,000
TOTAL		3,610,000,000

Key: **RED TEXT** – Available on www.besweb.org
GREEN TEXT – Translation and graphic design ongoing and our target is to have as many as possible added to the website this year.
BLUE TEXT – Translation commenced.

Table 2 - Current Lesson Availability

	Nr of Speakers
English	508,000,000
Hungarian	14,000,000
Czech Republic	12,000,000
Romanian	26,000,000
Russian	277,000,000
Polish	52,000,000
Ukrainian	47,000,000
India – Malayalam	38,000,000
TOTAL	974,000,000

Vision for translation

China – Mandarin		1,000,000,000
India – Hindi	Commenced	497,000,000
Pakistan – Urdu		
Malay – Indonesian		159,000,000
French	Commenced	129,000,000
Armenia	Commenced	6,000,000
TOTAL		1,791,000,000

Other News

Belfast, N. Ireland

from Gordon and Valerie Mullan
 "Our prize giving was held on Saturday past. We had a good time with about 60 all together. The

numbers locally has increased by 14 since the beginning of the year. This has been partly due to giving out our leaflets at the Bible Exhibition held both at Newtownbreda and Fortwilliam. The Exhibition is going to Cardy next month so will be giving out leaflets there also. Please pray!



Kerala, India 

The PBS team there have just launched the lessons to a group of 200 church leaders and youth workers. We are praying that the Malayalam lessons will be a blessing to thousands of children throughout the world.

Moldova 

Anotoli, an Emmaus worker and the PBS centre coordinator in Moldova, prints the lessons on a small A4 desktop office printer, refilling the inkjet cartridges by hand. Over 1,000 courses are printed per month, that's over 4,000 A4 pages printed on both sides!

Left: The launch of the lessons in Malayalam in India

SOME AUTONOMOUS PBS CENTRES IN THE UK AND IRELAND

PBS/PSS Centre	Main Contact	Contact
Dorset Postal Bible School	Stephen Gillham	01202 873500
Kingfisher Postal Bible School	Luke & Gwen Butler	01635 868820
Norfolk Postal Bible School	Janice Coleman	01502 562421
County Donegal Postal Bible School	Mrs Joan Patterson	02890 655151
Living Word Postal Bible School, Stoke-on-Trent	David and Susan Jackson	01782 642206
Swansea Postal Bible School	Steve and Gwyneth Treseder	01639 852708
Fermanagh & Tyrone Postal Bible School	Sam & Louise Balmer	02866 327801
Belfast Postal Bible School	Gordon & Valerie Mullan	02890 701481
North East Ireland Postal Bible School	Ivan and Jenny McClean	02825 878269
Words of Life Postal Bible School	Paul & Elizabeth Jackson	01423 505678
Postal Bible School, Republic of Ireland	Noel & Liza McMeekin	00353 4955 52915
United Beach Mission, Postal Bible School	Mavis Mathers	01132 304362
Scottish PSS and Bible Class	Christine Pollard	01738 440065
The Ultimate Adventure Club, Scotland	Paul Coxall	0771 5484934

If you know of any children who would benefit from Postal Bible School lessons, please encourage them to contact one of the PBS centres listed above. You could also start your own PBS even for only one or two children. See information on our orderform at http://www.besweb.org/en/Online_Resources/Order_Form.aspx
 Dan Green started one in his Church. See his blog:- <http://blogofdan.co.uk/?p=1939>
 Or email info@besweb.org Sample lessons are available from the BES trustees or can be downloaded from our website.

BES TRUSTEES & CONTACTS

UK BES TRUSTEES: Sam Balmer, Glyn Davies, Bert Gray, Stephen Gillham, David Purchase, David Tucker, Stephen Walls

Send gifts and payments for lessons to the treasurer

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Web Master: Steve McDonald steve@besweb.org

The Trustees are available to give reports and encourage prayer for this worldwide ministry.

www.besweb.org



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