



## Library Update

Hello and welcome to the December issue of the Mathew Hale Public Library newsletter, informing you as to what is happening in the Library.

No doubt, many of you will know the very good news of the appointment of Reverend Adrian Lane as the fulltime warden of the Library from 1 July 2010 to 31 December 2010. Adrian has great gifts and we are grateful to the Board of Ridley Melbourne for allowing Adrian to be seconded to us for that time.

Adrian's appointment will give us all a great impetus and, I am sure, will greatly further the work of the Library. You can read the media release for further details about Adrian's appointment on the website [www.mathewhalepubliclibrary.com](http://www.mathewhalepubliclibrary.com).

Reverend Ken Hopper and a number of his parishioners gave a wonderful presentation at the Library on developing a parish care program. It is really good to know such good things are happening in parishes and to hear of what they are doing. His talk can be downloaded from the Library website.

Another excellent workshop was held by Reverend Graham Stanton from Youthworks. Twenty mainly young people greatly benefited from his workshop. Further, his talk, "Family Feud? The relationship between Youth Ministry and the Family" can be downloaded from the website and we intend in the near future to publish it as a Mathew Hale Public Library lecture to help people in Youth Ministry. One very interesting part of Youthworks is what is called Year 13 which is a gap year program being an opportunity for young people to discover their strengths, develop their independence and explore their future with likeminded Christian peers in a safe and supportive environment. The program includes some serious theological study which helps students retain and refine their study skills. At the same time a lot of personal reflection is built into the program to help children to get to know themselves better as well as develop confidence in their faith. If you wish to have any further details about this, please look at [www.youthworks.net/year13](http://www.youthworks.net/year13).

This newsletter has a review of Adrian Lane's book of poetry and also a review of the book "Refuge on the Roper" which is another excellent book which was short-listed in the ACLS Book of the Year Awards.

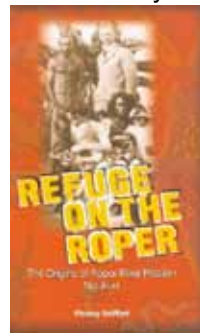
Thank you for your interest in the Mathew Hale Public

Library. I look forward to your continued support and seeing you at the events for next year which are also mentioned in the newsletter. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to support the work of the Library, please use the form included on this newsletter.

With best wishes.  
Dr Keith Weller  
*Honorary Warden*

## Book Review: Refuge on the Roper: The Origins of Roper River Mission Ngukurr

About three years ago I was privileged to attend an Aboriginal meeting. I quickly realised the cultural divide that I could not easily cross – for I do not possess the Aboriginal relationship with place, tradition and ancestry. Since then I have read various historical books to seek greater understanding and empathy. Typically such books are catalogues of atrocity – this one is different. Whilst admitting the terrible tragedies consequent to European incursion into what we now call Arnhem Land, the book focuses upon the Anglican Church in Victoria's motivation and response to that tragedy in committing to develop a place of refuge where the gospel could be shared.



What is our motivation for Mission? Is it only to share the gospel? In studying the Old Testament this year I have realised how connected social justice is to covenant obedience. It is no accident that most prophets frame their indictments in terms of social justice issues, as Amos 5 suggests, worship without justice is empty ritual. In linking the thinking of the Victorian Church and its agencies with the broader vision of CMS, Murray Sieffert explores significant issues still relevant today. The motivations and underlying assumptions described in this book helped me to stand aside from my cultural prejudices and observe God at work. I thank God for that challenge and the insights provided. The primary motivation for Roper Mission development, by a Church ill-equipped to respond, remains elusive, possibly because there was no one reason. The motivation combined Sanctuary-Evangelism-Civilising, the latter being a term that should make us sit back and think hard in the light of the ongoing 2007 Northern Territory reforms.

'Refuge on the Roper' features touching descriptions of missionary hardship and also records Aboriginal response. What did 'King Bob' perceive on that first visit that caused him to spread the news about the 'Good Spirit' and led him to say the following on his deathbed 'Jesus been talking along me.

Him been tell me no more be frightened to die.' Also interesting are the reports that the most enduring evangelism occurred through the converted Queensland Aboriginals from Yarrabah near Cairns that accompanied the Victorian mission team. I think there are lessons in this book that we need to consider when we undertake Aboriginal Mission. Would Amos have approved of this initiative – I rather think he would!

This book is available from the Matthew Hale Public Library.

Jim Smith  
St Andrews Anglican Church  
South Brisbane



## Southpaw: a matter of reversal, by Adrian Lane

**Straight talking poet-priest amuses and inspires**

Adrian Lane is a straight-talking poet, inhabiting a complex and contradictory world.

We're always reminded we're round the wrong way, he writes in *Left-Handers*. It's not just that scissors and irons make us feel clumsy/Or the belt's the wrong way/And the keys the wrong side. In fact, left-handers have to live with being gauche, clumsy, sinister even. They live with superstition, yet Lane concludes that they think differently, are maybe a mite more sensitive, while concluding that our worlds are a side more complex/And that's our gift to you.

So Adrian Lane appeals to our quizzical nature. But just as he makes light of his own foibles and failings, Lane is also engaged in the business of living with others. Many of the poems in this first collection are personal messages to friends, and the longest poem, *A Father's Love*, is also for me the most moving. Do you remember sandy summers at Paradise/teaching me to surf, /throwing me before the waves, he asks, or Do you remember preaching at Castle Hill Meths/with those faithful old-timers fundraising from their cake stalls. Lane's conversation with his father contains a lifetime of shared wonders, possibilities, and losses.

The motive needs expressed in the poetry, both to humour and to succour, make sense once you learn that Lane is an Anglican minister. Many of the poems are his own digressions on hymn verses, or tiny homilies on biblical verses. Affable and self-deprecating, he wants to share the good

times. He can be polemical though and doesn't shirk politics. His natural speaking voice has control of vernacular speech and the reflective mode. This makes him terribly good at description of Australian life, of which the summer holiday poems and those about his native Hunter Valley are special treats. The theology in these two verses of *Southern Christmas* couldn't be more to the point:

*The season's wrong, the reasons wrong  
We only want to party  
The light is long, the heat is high  
Drought makes brown, wind makes dry:  
No candles for a baby.  
But the season's right, the reasons right  
We must indeed have party  
For God has come to heal his home  
So sail and swim and rest and feast:  
It's God who makes the party.*

Adrian Lane has an easy mastery of plain speaking, but don't think for a moment there is anything plain about the contents. At his best, Lane offers a marvellous variety of ideas and subjects for our attention and amusement, inspired by books, art, nature, conversation, religion, but above all from his own lived experience.

*Reviewed by Philip Harvey. First published in TMA (The Melbourne Anglican) Sept 2009, reprinted courtesy Anglican Media Melbourne.*

## Upcoming Events

**Feb 16: Reverend Peter Judge-Mears "Creative ways of reaching families"**

7:30pm. Entry fee is a plastic note.

**Mar 23: Bishop Stephen Hale "Changing leadership for a changing church"**

7:30pm. Entry fee is a plastic note.

**May 4: Mark Fowler, Lawyer "Social Justice/Mission"**

7:30pm. Entry fee is a plastic note.

**May 20: Naomi Reed - Book Launch of the ACLS 2009 Book of the Year "No Ordinary View"**

7:30pm. St Marks Clayfield, Bonney Ave, Clayfield  
Entry fee by donation.

*\*All events are at the Mathew Hale Public Library unless otherwise mentioned.*

## Support the Library The Mathew Hale Public Library relies completely on gifted financial support

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