



# Addendum: Far Beyond Expectations

Compiled by Adrienne Lesleighter for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CWCI ministry in 2017.  
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KYB Production Director on the International Board.

**Please note: This is a snapshot of CWCI ministries from 1994 – 2016;  
statistics quoted are from that time, not current.**

## Introduction

In 2010 a young man wandered into a bookshop in Kenya and found an *Ephesians* KYB study book. He noted the CWCI International Office address inside and wrote the following:

*Sister Esther, I am called Malakwen Abraham and I love the Lord as my personal Saviour. I'm a student at a theological institution here in Kenya and got your contacts through a book that has elated my heart because it has not only enabled me to understand the book of Ephesians, but has enabled me to appreciate the challenges God's servants go through in their efforts to win souls for Christ.*

*I have been studying the letters of Paul in the Bible and through God's grace I got the book at a newspaper vendor's shop. The book indeed is a bit old, but nevertheless it is fantastic. It's given me real insight into the challenges the Apostle Paul went through even at the time he wrote the letter to the church in Ephesus, and uses words that describe the prevailing scenarios in the church in Africa today, where divisions are so rampant. As though Paul foresaw the terrible state the church is in today, he wrote the letter with passion for unity, and he elaborates on God's plan for redemption of mankind.*

*The study book - prepared with notes from Janice Kennedy - indeed is of great spiritual value to individual Christians and groups seeking to attain great spiritual growth. It's Gods will that I got the study guide and I have recommended it to Bible study groups in my Church. I'm a journalist by profession, but God has called me out of this for full time ministry; and I have consequently joined a theological school. Kindly pray for me and my family.*

## **CWCI ministry growth 1994 – 2016**

Much has happened since the writing of *Far Beyond Expectations*. CWCI has four boards to manage its growing ministry. An International Board has responsibility for producing all *Know Your Bible* studies and extends pastoral care within the organisation. Management Boards in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom grow the Lord's work and share blessings in their countries, and in their outreach areas of Melanesia, Pacific Islands and Europe (respectively). The Australian National Conference in 1993 marked a significant milestone for CWCI in Australia. Members voted for incorporation of the organisation, and this became legal on 22 December that year. While it had no bearing on our message or our ministry, it did enable CWCI to accept gifts and bequests, protected members from liability and, we could buy a property. On 1 August 1994, after an amazing provision from the Lord with a bequest specifically to purchase property, we had a home in Punchbowl, Sydney. It is large enough to accommodate board members during meetings and provide office space for staff.

*A Day of Prayer for our Nation* was commenced in 1994, and every year a week in May is dedicated to special prayer by committees and KYB groups across Australia. Also in 1994, we were saddened to hear of the death of Mrs. Chambers. So special to CWCI, but far more precious to her Lord, Alice didn't even begin her earthly ministry until she was a widow at 55. Alice, with her delightful sense of humour; Alice, who smiled so beautifully when she had her driver's licence renewed at 90!

In December 1998 our beloved founder, Grace Collins, went home to the Lord. In the early days of CWCI, Grace attended every first convention. Her desire for things to be done well was a hallmark of conventions. There are first-hand memories of a very young committee getting ready for its second convention and not having the brochures to Grace by a certain date. That committee redeemed itself by going out to the airport where Grace was to land for a few minutes en-route to another place, and personally handing them over! She was not backward in giving a little tug to the skirt of a 'long-winded' speaker! She wanted the best, because nothing but the best was good enough for the Lord. Grace has a special place in our hearts.

In June 2000 the ownership of *Christian Woman* magazine changed hands. There were months of agonising over the decision to sell, but rising costs and falling subscriptions showed very clearly that the magazine had placed financial strain on our funds. However, one door shuts, another opens. Not long after, Australia was given an opportunity to partner with *Trans World Radio* in a program tailored to suit Australian women. *Women of Hope* was produced in Melbourne and aired on more than sixty radio stations, until rising production costs forced TWR to withdraw, and Australia to re-think. The program ceased airing in June 2004.

In 2001 a global gathering of women was planned as a celebration of God's goodness, to be held in Houston, Texas. Representatives of the International Board and the Australian President joined women's ministries from many countries for a week of praising God, listening to challenging

speakers and sharing resources for women. KYB studies were displayed, and workshops held to explain how KYB operated. It was a thrilling time. The tragedy of 9/11 had occurred the week beforehand, and we realised how blessed we were to have travelled to Houston in safety.

As CWCI's 50th anniversary approached, the Australian National Management Board considered how best to celebrate. A committee member suggested that putting God's Word into women's hands would be a lasting celebration, and the idea was born. Around the same time, the board was shown The Bible Society in Australia's "Surfers' New Testament" and they were encouraged to produce something along the same lines. After collecting testimonies from several CWCI members, as well as those of some well-known Christian women from the sporting and entertainment worlds, a Contemporary English Version New Testament was produced. It was entitled "*Know Your Bible - Celebrate God!*" Published by the Bible Society, the New Testament was enthusiastically received, with the first print run of 5,000 selling out within a very short time. Two further print runs took the total number to 20,000, and women were still asking for copies many years after they had all sold. The staff at Head Office cheerfully undertook the mammoth task of packing and posting all the orders, while the board prayed that the New Testaments would produce much fruit for God's kingdom. Fulfilling CWCI Australia's mission statement, "*Growing women in Christ through sharing the Bible*", was indeed a fitting way to celebrate.

It seemed incredible that fifty years of CWCI ministry had passed in 2007. As women came to the annual convention in Sydney, there was great celebrating. We walked through five decades of ministry in song and story, praising the Lord for all that He had done. In this year also, the logo changed. Countries now use different colours for the logo to define their country's ministry, but all are under the banner of CWCI.

In 2007, *Bible Society in Australia* invited CWCI International to write the devotional material for a new edition of the NIV Bible. Writers involved in the ministry of *Know Your Bible* responded to the invitation to produce devotionals for each day of the year, ten articles on *Women of the Bible*, sixteen articles on *Life Issues* and an article on the *Genealogy of Jesus*. At the Sydney Women's Convention in March 2009, the launching took place with many guests from the Bible Society and related organisations present. The Bible, in three editions, has been sold throughout Australia and overseas with glowing comments. Women purchased copies for gifts as well as for everyday reading and meditation. The *Women's Devotional Bible* was the blueprint for another edition by the Bible Society for use in third-world countries.

This was the year that we said goodbye to our beloved Jean Raddon. Her legacy is something to be treasured. In the wider world, Jean impacted everyone who met her or shared her ministry. There are wonderful memories of laughter, jokes and tears as her message hit a chord in our hearts. Now in heaven, Jean will be praising our Saviour in magnificent voice.

## **Growth in Papua New Guinea (PNG)**

In 2011 CWCI celebrated 30 years of ministry in PNG. The Australian President sent this message:

*There is so much to praise God for as together we celebrate the coming of CWCI to your land 30 years ago. People all around the world are rejoicing with you and giving thanks to God for you. From small beginnings, around 50 Know Your Bible groups now meet throughout Papua New Guinea to study God's Word. Bible Colleges, scripture classes, and groups of new believers are using KYB studies and growing in the Lord Jesus. In the last few years seventeen groups have been established in Bougainville, and six in Lae.*

There were wonderful celebrations for two weeks in PNG in September 2011. Workshops and meetings were held in many places to promote CWCI and messages from the book of *Nehemiah* encouraged the women to *"love the Lord; to live for him; to praise him and pour out our hearts to him; we are building daily, for eternity. If we belong to him, we have the wonderful assurance that we are on the way to a final building day when we meet the Lord Jesus in heaven"*. At the final gathering in Port Moresby, more than 100 women came together for the day, excited by all that had been shared; joyful in fellowship and blessed.

## **Growth in New Zealand and the Pacific (NZ)**

CWCI in New Zealand has a major focus on conventions as well as many KYB groups. The recent *Summer Tour*, with the theme *Who Cares*, included 26 meetings in 27 days, a mammoth effort! The organising committee was so grateful that the Lord was – as always – faithful in keeping the speaker on her feet and sharing what He had placed on her heart for the women attending. Annual conventions are held in the north and south of New Zealand, as well as a West Coast Safari. There are also mini safaris, visiting areas that may have missed out on inclusion in larger ministry trips.

New Zealand produces a wonderful magazine: *NewZlink*, which is well circulated at all functions, conventions and KYB groups. A church pastor requested twenty copies of the KYB study *Simon Peter* because the men wanted to start up a men's study group and had heard over the years how good the KYB studies are. KYB is used by the women of his church. This pastor had checked out the New Zealand website as well. Encouragement comes from many sources.

Fiji is part of the Pacific Islands outreach that CWCI New Zealand oversees. Two women's conferences have been held in Fiji this year: one in Suva during May, and the other near Nadi in June. Forty-five women attended each event. The weekend held at the Sabeto Christian Camp was on the theme of *Holiness* and was organised by the Fiji KYB Coordinator and the committee in Nadi. Speakers from Australia and New Zealand presented the messages.

A New Zealand team of four, together with the IB KYB Production Director, also took part in the program. During the week the team travelled to other parts of Fiji to visit and encourage the women in Suva, Tonia village and Lautoka. Women told what studying God's Word through KYB has meant to them and their families, and how it has transformed them and brought them joy, even in difficult circumstances. This story of a recent cyclone illustrates that.

*We had no concept of a Category 5 cyclone until it hit. We just praised and prayed. Three of us in my home. I said: we will not stop until there is peace in our hearts. After three hours I was led to do communion and finally peace settled in and, at the same time, the cyclone died down. Another friend wrote these words in response to my Facebook message to see if she was safe.*

*The Fiji KYB Coordinator, Akosita, told me of the ladies who had come from a village to talk about starting KYB. They met in Suva at her daughter's house at 2pm on the Saturday the storm hit. A curfew was activated and this meant the ladies could not return to their village. They stayed with her daughter singing and praying till 2am, while all the time sheets of iron and other debris were flying past. The next day as there was no transport, the police kindly took the ladies, along with their KYB books, home. They now meet on Monday nights.*

*Akosita's home in Nadi suffered flooding and they lost most of their linen. Her mattress was soaked but she said it dried out on the roof enough for her to use. In some areas where there are KYB groups, homes have been lost. We expect there will be a need for Bibles especially on Vanua Levu. It is too early to gauge the needs. Akosita reports that several new groups have started and there are always enquiries.*

Almighty God has CWCI NZ in his hands and is blessing the ministry in that country. The work has changed, is continuing to change, and must change if it is to stay current and meet the needs of women in 2017 and into the future. The message remains the same: the life changing love of the Lord and our walk with Him. This is our focus. How we present that message and the tools we use to do so will change. Failure to do so will let the Lord down. Praise Him for His ongoing blessing in the beautiful country of New Zealand.

## **Growth in the United Kingdom and Europe (UK)**

The role for Christian women has changed in many ways beyond recognition since CWCI first came to the United Kingdom. The majority of women work; many grandmothers mind children; churches now have programs their women are heavily involved in; all these often leaving very little time for 'outside activities'. This is an ongoing challenge. However "our God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us." Ephesians 3:20.

In 2007 CWCI in the UK changed its name to *Know Your Bible*, part of the ministry of CWCI. Two weekend conferences are held in alternate years, one in Derbyshire, the other at Brunel Manor in the Torbay Area. This particular weekend conference has been going for more than 30 years, organised by the South West Regional Team. A young mum who made enquiries about a conference in the Torbay area all those years ago is still a valued part of this team.

In 2015 a speaker from Australia was invited for the northern conference. To make the best use of her stay, a speaking tour was arranged for her, visiting areas where there is no day conference or where particular groups need encouragement. This culminated in a wonderful time in the Shetland Isles, where the women were thrilled that the team had travelled so far to enable them to have a KYB Conference. This was the first occasion such a tour was organised with a speaker and it has been repeated in 2016, facilitating areas without teams to have conferences. This was a time of great encouragement, and it may be God's way for the future as an addition to established conference areas, some of which have been going for many years.

KYB some years ago was called 'the best kept secret'. It is now promoted far more widely with leaflets and stands at other conferences and, when permitted, every opportunity is taken to speak about the work and studies. Passing the baton on to future generations is both a priority and a challenge when everything is now done with the use of technology.

In the UK at present there are around 160 groups. There is a list of study books available and groups choose what they want to study. Although the number of groups has shrunk a little in recent years, the area covered is greater. A group in Southport has expanded to three, meeting on three different days, studying the same book, at the same rate, enabling women to slot into another group if unable to attend the home group. All three groups meet together for lunch in August during the summer break.

For many years there was a European sub-committee that took KYB into several European countries. Many were formerly Eastern European, and they worked tirelessly promoting the studies. Many, many seeds were sown and women were able to study God's Word, using books in their own language. Eternity will show the fruit of these labours. After many years the need for this team ceased, although the work is still overseen by the National Leadership Team of KYB. God is now opening up new possibilities in Europe with books translated into most European languages. Who is equal to such a task? We are not, but our amazing God is! Most of these languages are now spoken in the UK with many Europeans living there, so many opportunities are also on their doorstep.

In Denmark, after books being faithfully translated over many years by a Danish couple, with assistance from several others leading groups, a team has been formed to take the work forward. Two of the team were able to attend the Northern Conference in 2015. Sitting in a garden chatting before the conference, a team member suddenly got up and said: "I need to get my

notebook, there are so many ideas I need to write down". Just sitting and sharing all that God is doing, yet the result has been further vision and encouragement for Denmark.

KYB is alive and well in the UK with women all over the country keen to take the work forward.

## **Growth in Australia and Melanesia**

CWCI ministry was founded in Australia in 1957 with a group of 20 plus women going away for a weekend of Bible teaching, trusting husbands to feed the offspring and hopefully bathe them and tuck them into bed. This was a big step of faith. Trusting God every step of the way, the first convention was held, then another. The first KYB study was written in great haste in 1972 and produced on photocopied sheets for women to study following a convention. In 1971, seven women ventured on the first safari to Queensland, travelling by coach for three weeks. Today, things are very different in Australia. A safari team recently spent 13 days there teaching, singing and laughing with many families who live, work and serve in the islands and communities in the wilderness of Arnhem Land in the northeast corner of the Northern Territory. As always, blessings abound to those who hear and those who give.

National safaris visit areas of the Northern Territory, Queensland, Western and South Australia. A team leader and speaker follow a planned itinerary, flying in small planes and having access to many isolated towns and country properties. Women of the outback are thrilled to have such a visit and gatherings are arranged in homesteads, church buildings and schools. They are eager for fellowship and teaching. Some gatherings are very small, others larger, but this is not a numbers game. It is a ministry that is filled with joy and expectancy and unique to CWCI. Regional safaris operate in a similar way, but travel is mostly by car.

The Sydney Women's Convention is held annually, following the pattern of long ago. Conventions are also held in most other regions and women look forward to great fellowship and teaching at these events. Throughout Australia there are many excellent speakers and teachers. CWCI is truly thankful to God for providing such women. It is the faithful teaching of the Word that is the key factor in growing women in Christ.

In 2015, a young married woman with three school-aged children, living with her husband on a property in the far west of NSW, contacted a local CWCI committee member with an idea. She wondered about starting a KYB group using Skype. Two months later the group commenced with five women. It became evident that using Skype was not going to be a long-term option but teleconferencing would be! There are now eight women aged between 15 and 68 who dial in regularly to a 1800 free-call number. They study, pray and share Christian fellowship. All the women live in rural and remote NSW and have no opportunity to attend a church-based Bible study. Nothing is impossible with God!



There are more than 1600 KYB groups meeting regularly across Australia. Some groups meet in retirement homes and villages. One group meets in a school and finishes in time for the mums to take their children home. The demand for night groups is slowly growing. One church has nine groups. Another lady is running a group for her teenage daughter and her daughter's friends.

Audio KYB studies on cassette, assist those who may be vision impaired, or who just prefer to listen rather than read and write. There are also large print KYB study books available, and KYB studies using Simple English.

There are 80 students in Australia and five students overseas who use KYBC (KYB by Correspondence). KYB TOO (The Other Option) commenced a few years ago when mixed groups, mainly in churches, wished to use the KYB material. Leaders order studies from head office but pastoral care is the responsibility of the churches. There are currently 200 groups in KYB TOO. KYB for mixed groups (KYB4M) commenced in 2009 and operates independently of CWCI Australia.

CWCI Australia funds the outreach of KYB into Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands – all part of Melanesia. KYB studies were introduced to the Solomon Islands more than fifteen years ago, and to Vanuatu in 2011. In Melanesia, women usually have their own village dialect and also speak some form of Pidgin English. Most have some degree of difficulty reading and writing English. Translations from Special Edition or Accessible English KYB into Pidgin are mainly done in-country by local women and checked and produced through the International Office. Sixteen studies in Tok Pisin have been translated for use in Papua New Guinea

KYB continues to grow in the Solomon Islands where more than one thousand women are in study groups. The Australian Melanesia Director works alongside the Melanesian Executives in their leadership roles. Four KYB studies are now available in Solomon Islands Pijin. There are about 70 local languages, but only three have complete translations of the Bible. As many of the women in Melanesia have poor literacy, some KYB books in Pidgin have been downloaded on audio devices for use in areas of need. Pidgin Bibles are also donated where there are needs. Women in Melanesia do not have opportunities to attend Bible studies so they value highly the sharing together over God's Word.

## **Growth in Know Your Bible (KYB) Production**

A new KYB study doesn't just happen overnight; it is a four-year process. Four studies are produced each year. The International KYB Production Director interacts with the Production Officer and a sub-committee. We are forever grateful to God for our gifted writers who work solidly for eighteen months to produce each study. It is then edited, trialled, proofread and vetted before being given the 'green light'. Two foundational studies were produced in 2015: *Jesus of*

*Nazareth and Good News! The Bible and its message.* Both studies have received excellent feedback. One woman wrote:

*I thought I knew all there was to know about Jesus but I have found a much deeper level of faith and appreciation for what Jesus did to save me.*

KYB studies are being translated into 60 languages with a presence in 80 countries. This work is overseen by the International KYB Translation Director. Most people who use translated KYB studies aren't aware that Head Office doesn't have a large translation department for the 60 languages. There is only ONE person, the Translation Production Officer, involved in the formatting and production of translated studies. However, there is a huge army of people who are helping with the task of translating, checking, correcting, vetting and proofreading. There are more than 100 people around the world involved in some aspect of the translation program.

More than twenty translated studies are received in the International Office each year. Each of these needs to be checked, corrected, vetted and proofread before being formatted and printed as KYB studies. More languages are considered as requests for KYB studies are received. A Japanese translation began at the end of last year.

KYB studies have been translated into most of the major European languages and the majority of the most widely spoken Indian languages. It's also a real blessing that some progress is being made towards filling the need for KYB studies in more simple English for the huge numbers of people around the world for whom English is their second or third language.

An International Prayer Calendar is produced bi-annually and this features prayer needs of people involved in translating, checking and use of translated KYB studies around the world. Greater awareness means that more people are approaching the International Office to order KYB studies in different languages and take them to areas where they are travelling. For example, people travelling to Cambodia recently took Khmer and English studies. People travelling to Myanmar took Burmese studies, and someone who often visits Nepal took Nepali studies to Kathmandu. Someone ordered Spanish studies to send to a missionary in Spain, while another person ordered a Spanish study to use with her KYB group in Spain.

There are now twelve studies translated into German and people from the church in Germany who helped with translation are very happy to see the studies now being used in their church. The International Board plans to promote translated KYB studies in the Netherlands, Germany, Czech Republic and Romania in the near future. Enquiries are often received from people in countries that cannot afford to pay for studies. If no one can be found who is travelling to those countries, the studies are posted. Because of the high postage costs, CWCI International is hoping to establish a sponsorship fund to help subsidise the cost of postage and also examining other technology-based means of providing the studies.

Some KYB studies have now been translated into most of the major European languages and most of the main Indian languages. It's also a real blessing that some progress is being made towards filling the need for KYB studies in more simple English for the huge numbers of people around the world who have English as their second or third language.

There are websites for each of the four CWCI boards. They provide up-to-date information globally. Each promotes KYB, newsletters, magazines, diary dates for functions. The international site is [www.cwci.org.au](http://www.cwci.org.au). Links on that site will take you to the national websites.

## Conclusion

Now – what happened to Abraham? The International office forwarded his letter to the writer of the Ephesians study and she began email correspondence with him. Abraham commenced a KYB group, encouraged others to do so, and promoted KYB everywhere! We may never know just how many Africans have been blessed by KYB, but Jesus does.

The President of the CWCI International Board, Lisa Watson, included the following in her 2015 Annual Report:

*To quote an excerpt from Far Beyond Expectations by Jean H. Raddon back in 1993:*

*It would seem that all concerned must ever be alert to the changing world around us. CWCI is a positive movement for progress. It is obvious that we must not stagnate. We must beware of limited vision and be open and sensitive to whatever the Spirit of God says to us. We need to be involved 'to the hilt' wherever we are, so we do not limit God by our limited vision. He is always on the move. Let us be on the move with Him.*

We are looking forward with great anticipation to the days ahead. Perhaps more than ever before, we are aware of walking "by faith and not by sight". As our world changes and the darkness of evil seems to increase, the light of God's Word shines more brightly, more obviously. There is no greater ministry in our world today than the proclamation of the TRUTH that will set people free, and that is our privileged task.

From the first small steps of CWCI's inception to this present day, the Lord's leading, guiding, providing and equipping have been a constant. Over the whole of this ministry, God's divine fingerprints have been clearly seen. One day, the fullness of what He has done *in* us and *through* us for His glory and kingdom will be truly known.

We praise the Lord for the door of opportunity that is still open to us for providing Bible study materials to many places in our world. That door may not remain open much longer. We are told in 1 Corinthians 4:2 "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove *faithful*." That is our prayer: to be faithful as we go forward with the Lord into the future.

Adrienne Lesleighter, 2016.