

exist in other countries of Central and South America, however at this moment the author does not have any specific information.

## Christian Endeavor in Australia and the Pacific

(Mrs. Joyce Spicer, Australia)

In Australia and the Pacific islands CE was introduced between 1883 and the early 1900s. In Australia CE commenced with information from Colonel Kensel who had experience of the new CE movement in America. His daughter Mrs. Thurgood began 'The Young Ladies Society of Christian Endeavour' in Geelong, Victoria in 1883, thus commencing the first CE Society in Australia.

### Australia

After the Geelong Society began, subsequent CE Societies commenced in the State of Victoria in Melbourne and other towns over the next seven years. In 1890 the Victorian CE Union was formed and conducted the first Convention in Melbourne.



In 1891, it was reported that there were 65 Societies, with a membership of over 3000. Dr. Clark came to Australia and the third Convention in 1892 had 205 Societies attending. CE flourished in Victoria with the big highlight being when they hosted the 10th World's CE Convention in 1938 with thousands present. CE in Victoria declined after more than a century and the State Union folded in the late 1990's.

The first **Queensland** CE Society was commenced in 1888 in the capital city, Brisbane. Several churches of the Congregational and Baptist denominations quickly commenced CE and the State Union was formed in 1891. Christian Endeavour grew strongly in city and country churches and by 1935 there were 721 Societies with 15125 members in the State. Since the 1980's the numbers have declined

and in 2008 the numbers were down to one Junior Society in the City Baptist Church with an Adult Grade and the State Council still functioning.

CE Societies commenced in **New South Wales** (NSW) in 1890 and '91. In 1891 NSW CE commenced the work of evangelism and discipling of the aboriginals which became the beginnings of the United Aborigines Mission (UAM). In 1894 there were 237 Societies with 6943 members. Statistics reveal the development and progress of CE in NSW escalated and by 1935 13 metropolitan and 17 country Unions had a total membership of 21,000, but 50 years later there was a big decline in Church participation in the CE movement. However 1962 was a special year for New South Wales and Australia when the 14<sup>th</sup> World Convention was successfully held in Sydney. By 2008, New South Wales CE had only a few Junior CE groups, two adult groups and a State Council.

**Tasmania** is a small island state off the south eastern coast of Australia and the churches there commenced Christian Endeavour also in 1890. Over the next 40 years Tasmania had increased to 111 Societies functioning in the three age groups for children, young teenagers and older youth. Their first National Convention was held in 1933 with 1,450 delegates from all States attending. Twenty years later in 1953, 1200 delegates made the journey to Tasmania and in 1966 the last National Convention was held on the island. Like the other Australian States CE was declining by the 90's and the Council closed.

The first Society to commence in **South Australia** was in a Baptist Church in the capital city of Adelaide in 1888. CE Societies were commenced in Bible Colleges, a Girl's Reformatory, on a sheep station and in the Quakers and Seventh Day Adventist Churches. South Australian CE had a great interest in Choir formation and from the early years expert Choir Conductors formed Junior and Youth Choirs for the National Conventions and 'Festivals of Song'. In 1966 the CE

choir took on the name of 'The Endeavourers', they toured Australia and in 1981 sang in the Centenary Convention in Portland, Maine, USA. After the 1996 National Convention in Adelaide the choir disbanded. CE Camps were also a major part of their program. The largest one was held after the World Convention in 1938 at which 300 enthusiastic young people attended. Individual CE Societies were not functioning in any church in South Australia in 2008, but the CE Camps are still conducted and the State Council is functioning.

**Western Australia** is the isolated region of Australia, being separated from the more heavily populated Eastern States by the vast Nullabour Plain and huge desert areas. CE made its way across to WA and by 1889 was commenced in Perth City. Societies were quickly established in many metropolitan districts as well as in country towns. The State Union was formed in 1895 and annual State Conventions were held. Western Australia CE began a unique annual event called "Orange and Flower Sunday" in August. CE members visited Hospitals and Nursing Homes with an orange, a small spray of flowers and a card made by the Endeavourers for each patient. This practice was maintained up till 2005. In the 1960's and 70's the church denominations replaced CE with their own brand of Youth Ministry and CE began to decline. Since the 1990's only a few Junior CE Groups continued. However in 2008 one very large Junior CE group met every week with over 160 children including many ethnic groups from Sudan and East Africa, as well as Myanmar.

### **Pacific Islands**

Christian Endeavour is a vital part of many of the Pacific Islands having been introduced by missionaries in the last 100 years. It remains strong in some areas, usually within a specific denomination. Their traditional worship style with lots of singing, dance movement and mime and praying takes place in their CE meetings which are mainly for adults following each Sunday service.

In the **Marshall Islands** CE commenced in 1895 and has been strong in the United Church of Christ.

A large group of delegates attended the World Convention in Singapore in 2002. In 2003 a Youth CE Convention was held at Majuro and 6000 from many surrounding islands attended.

In **Pohnpei, Truk** and **Guam** (Micronesia) many of the churches in the United Church of Christ have CE. Pohnpei celebrated its Centenary of CE in 2005, attended by about 500.

**Manus Island** (Papua New Guinea) was visited by Rev. Arno Pagel, World CE President in 1962. He met up with American and German missionaries and introduced Christian Endeavour to them. The CE Pledge was translated into Pidgin English. A National Union was established in 1970 but it was not known if CE was still functioning on that island until a recent connection in 2009 was made with the WCEU office. A German missionary, Simon Herrman, has reported that youth groups function in many of the 40 churches within the Evangelical Church of Manus (ECOM) and a CE Convention is planned for January 2011..

CE had been established on the **Solomon Islands** and annual conventions are conducted.

CE came to **Western Samoa** in 1890 through missionaries of the London Missionary Society and was spread by the students of their Theological College. Christian Endeavourers from that group took the Gospel message to Papua New Guinea, some even facing martyrdom. This country has maintained very strong CE in the Congregational Christian Churches. In 2004 they hosted the 2004 Regional Convention at which approximately 700 attended.



CE Members from American Samoa

In **American Samoa**, the island of Tau has displayed a serious involvement in CE, with large numbers of young people attending and participating in all the World and Regional Conventions. The CE World President from 2002 to 2010, Rev. Faa-taape Lavata'i, is a senior Minister of the church in Tau.

In **Tonga** CE had been predominantly in the Methodist Church. It commenced about 100 years ago, but has declined.

The Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga held the Regional Convention in Tonga in 2008 and is now planning to reintroduce CE into its churches.

In **New Zealand** rapid growth occurred to spread CE in Auckland (North Island) and Christchurch (South Island) in the early 1900's but was interrupted by the First World War. After 1924 Rev. Lionel Fletcher stimulated the movement into activity and progressed with a big emphasis on missionary service. The World President, Rev. Dr. Daniel Poling visited New Zealand CE in 1935. The work has now declined, but a recent report in 2009 indicates CE is still healthy and functioning well in 60 churches in NZ belonging to the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa.