

1

The Voice of the Andes

It was for me a miracle to be able to bear God's Word in Kikongo language. I am writing to let you know that your teaching is reaching (as) far as the east and despite of the distance, you and us in God's strength will be in fellowship every morning.

Mr Miezi, Matadi, Zaire

Excerpt from a letter written in response to a radio program produced by HCJB Australia in 1991.

There was something *magical* in the air. On 13 January 1910, the richly expressive voice of opera singer Enrico Caruso was heard in several different locations around New York via *The Wireless*. It was the first truly public radio broadcast.

By the 1920s, people all around the world were excitedly tuning in. There was a growing clan of ham radio enthusiasts. Small, and not so small, boys constructed crystal sets on kitchen tables. Families began gathering around their large console sets to tune into variety shows, regular programs, news, sport and music.

The world was on the brink of a revolution that would soon encompass radio broadcasting, satellite communication, cordless and mobile phones and wireless computer networks. Radar, GPS and even microwave ovens all depend on radio today. We transmit millions of conversations, music, pictures and data invisibly through the air over many thousands of miles every second of every day.

God's people were early in realising radio's potential. Right from the beginning, God began preparing individuals who would have the vision, energy and commitment to develop a ministry around this medium. One of these was Clarence Wesley Jones, born in 1900 into a Salvation Army

family. Clarence's father George had been forced to choose between his parents and his faith. George's father had told him, *'Son, this thing can't go on any longer. I'm tired of hearing about conversion and all that stuff. Now, you've got to make up your mind; you either leave the Salvation Army once and for all, or you leave home. You can have your choice.'*¹

George chose the Salvation Army, and so Clarence grew up not only in a Chicago Christian home, but one that was filled with music. When Clarence was twelve, his father took him to his first band practice and he quickly took up the trombone. His whole world soon revolved around music and the church. Clarence was invited to play in the band at Moody Memorial Church where evangelist Paul Rader was pastor at the time. After six weeks Clarence gave his life to Christ. Just two weeks after that, Clarence responded to a missionary call with the announcement, *'I've got Christ as my Saviour. I'll be glad to do anything He wants, go anyplace He sends me.'*²

By the end of that week Clarence had enrolled at Moody Bible Institute. He said of this time, *'I suppose more than any man, Paul Rader influenced me for God and the Gospel, putting things into my life that have formed the warp and woof of fabric for Christian service later.'*³

When Paul Rader started the Chicago Gospel Tabernacle in 1922, he asked Clarence to join the staff. Clarence's introduction to radio was memorable: *'On a windy afternoon, June 1922, Rader and his brass quartet climbed to the roof of the old City Hall in downtown Chicago. Richard Oliver Sr and Clarence were on trombone, Howard Jones (Clarence's brother) and Oral Thomas were on trumpet, standing in front of Chicago's radio station...What they saw was a small booth constructed of rough pine boards with no roof on it, and a small hole cut in one side. "Point your instruments at that hole and when we say play, you play!" they were ordered...all across the city of Chicago, on those first little crystal sets, they were heard.'*⁴

With Clarence as program director, the Gospel Tabernacle was soon broadcasting up to sixteen hours each Sunday on local radio station WBBM, as well as a daily prime-time morning program called *The Breakfast Brigade* that aired on 26 CBS stations across the United States.

At the Chicago Gospel Tabernacle (the TAB), Clarence was an associate pastor, director of music, director of radio and led Bible studies for young men. Clarence also oversaw the TAB's campground ministry and helped develop a children's program called the Tabernacle Scouts, that Lance Latham would later develop into the AWANA program. These roles gave him valuable skills, as well as the ability to work long, hard hours. In the middle of this gruelling schedule, Clarence managed to fit in marriage to Katherine (nee Welty), his sweetheart of several years. All the while the call to the mission field was uppermost and Clarence soon received a clear call to *go south*.

In 1928 Clarence made a largely fruitless seven-week trip to the Latin American countries of Venezuela, Columbia, Panama and Cuba with his brother-in-law Chester Churchhill. A year later, Clarence listened enthralled to Ruth and John Clark describing their experiences as Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) missionaries in Ecuador, a land of snow-capped volcanoes, tropical jungles, savage head-hunting tribes and the Amazon rainforest. The capital city of Quito enjoyed stable government, mild climate and an abundance of birds, flowers and beautiful scenery.

'Why not come to Ecuador?' was the Clarks' suggestion. This encounter was followed by a visit from Grace and Reuben Larson (also C&MA missionaries) who told stories of their pioneering work among the Quichua Indians in the Ecuadorian jungle. After some initial struggles, the couple had established good relationships and soon began

acting as government representatives in the area in which they settled, thus opening up opportunities to meet and interact with officials as well as locals. Reuben was appointed as Superintendent of Oriente (a region of eastern Ecuador) Schools and given the task of supervising road building and setting up a meteorological station, as well as overseeing the sales of salt and gold. He was even invited to visit the President of Ecuador in recognition of his work.

Although they saw spiritual growth, Grace and Reuben were unsettled by the knowledge of how many people still had little or no opportunity to hear the gospel message. Reuben had been deeply impressed by Dr R R Brown when he talked about broadcasting the Gospel over radio. He became determined to somehow make use of this medium.

That night Clarence and Reuben committed to work together to bring the vision of missionary radio broadcasting to a reality. Reuben would set about getting all the various permissions needed from the Ecuadorian government to broadcast, while Clarence set about raising funds and sourcing necessary equipment.

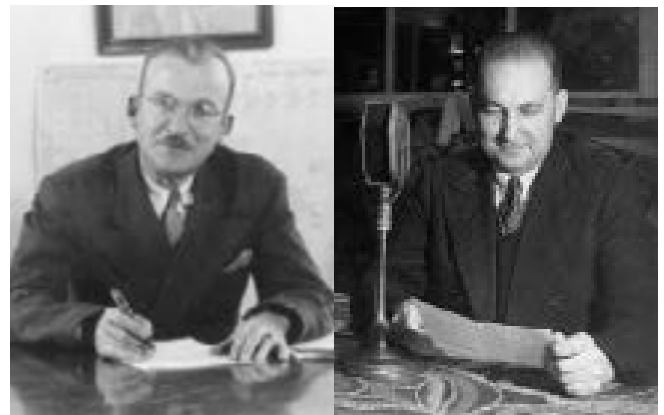
The World Radio Missionary Fellowship

With the help of Stuart Clark, the Field Chairman of the C&MA, and Luis Calisto, an esteemed Ecuadorian lawyer, Reuben apprehensively approached the government. However, God had prepared the way. Within a few months all the necessary permissions were obtained, and a formal contract for a radio station was signed by the president, ratified by congress and formally granted on 15 August 1930.

Ecuador was a strongly Roman Catholic country, and there were less than a dozen evangelical Christians in the capital city, so it was an amazing

work of God that they gave a Protestant organisation permission to establish the first official radio station in Ecuador, along with the granting of a 25-year broadcasting contract.

Radio was in its infancy, and was largely unknown in South America. Radio experts from major US corporations said they should avoid trying to broadcast radio from Ecuador altogether because of the mountains, and strong magnetic forces. Many Christians at the time believed that radio was a tool of the devil; after all he is described as the *prince of the power of the air*. But Clarence, Reuben, Stuart and John Clark were all convinced that God was spurring them on.



Clarence Jones and Reuben Larson

On 9 May 1931, an organisation called The World Radio Missionary Fellowship (WRMF), a somewhat presumptuous title at the time, was incorporated. Clarence's grandmother donated the first dollar!

On 25 July 1931, the first officers were elected: Clarence Jones was President, Howard Jones (Clarence's brother) Vice-President, Ruth Churchill (Clarence's sister-in-law) Secretary/Treasurer, with Katherine Jones (Clarence's wife) and Lance Latham comprising the first board.

In 1938, Katherine Jones was elected Vice-President, and Reuben Larson, Stuart Clark and John Clark were added as trustees.

With only six known radio receivers in Ecuador, one could be forgiven for thinking the project was just a little crazy. The world stock market had crashed only months earlier, leaving many financially destitute. Where would the necessary funds come from?

Clarence said of this time, *'From the human standpoint, it may have appeared plain foolhardy. But when for eight years, you have watched a man like Paul Rader (his mentor from the TAB) trust the Lord and go ahead regardless of circumstances; it seemed the logical thing to do. So although it appeared to be poor timing from the economic standpoint, yet it was God's timing and we're grateful we happened to be around.'*⁵

Live on the Airwaves

On Christmas Day 1931 the first broadcast went live across the airways. The first studio was the living room of Clarence and Katherine's house. The first transmitter building was a shed where the previous owner had housed his sheep. The first antenna towers were obtained from the local telephone company in the form of two 26-metre eucalyptus poles. The first antenna was just a single wire between these two poles set 60 metres apart.

Daily broadcasting had begun. Radio Station HCJB became the first ever missionary radio station in the world, as well as the first radio station in Ecuador with daily programs. (Although shortwave broadcasts from Ecuador ceased in 2009, Radio HCJB-FM continues still, stronger than ever.)

The stations call sign letters 'HCJB' were chosen since HC was the designation for Ecuador, and JB was added to make the slogan *Hoy Christo Jesús*

Bendice – 'Today Christ Jesus Blesses' in Spanish and *Heralding Christ Jesus' Blessings* in English. This was never the organisation's name, but was such an effective slogan, that many people assumed it to be the meaning behind the name of HCJB.



The inaugural broadcast of HCJB was on Christmas Day, 1931.

The first transmitter was only 200 watts, yet amazingly the signal sometimes reached all the way back to Chicago. In 1936 a medium-wave transmitter was added for regional broadcasts, and then in 1937, a 1000-watt shortwave transmitter.

In 1938 Clarence Jones was offered a second-hand 5000-watt transmitter for USD\$10 000. During a spent year in the US, Clarence could only raise USD\$3000 toward its cost. Despite Clarence rejecting a proposal by R G Le Tourneau to fund the starting of a new radio station facility in the Philippines, Le Tourneau still gave Clarence the needed USD\$7000. Le Tourneau was renowned for giving 90 percent of his money to missions. It seems God perhaps closed the door in the Philippines providentially as the Japanese certainly would have targeted or occupied that station during World War II.

Not knowing why, Clarence felt hindered from going ahead with the purchase. He finally understood when advised by two young technicians that the transmitter was obsolete and of no real use to HCJB. One of these technicians, Clarence Moore, (later known for the cubical quad antenna) could build a new transmitter for about the same price. R G LeTourneau provided room in his Illinois factory, and in 1939 a brand new 10 000-watt transmitter was delivered to Quito.

On Easter Sunday 1940, the President of Ecuador, Andres Cordova, *threw the switch* to bring the new transmitter into operation. Shortwave broadcasting to much of the world had finally begun, confirmed by letter responses from all over the Americas, New Zealand, Australia, Africa, India, Great Britain and so on. By HCJB's 17th anniversary in 1948, they were broadcasting in seventeen languages, including Arabic, Bohemian, Czech, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Quichua, Spanish, Swedish, Urdu and Yiddish.

As HCJB moved on to bigger antennas, more and more languages, printing, television, FM radio, satellite and more, it continued to keep its eyes firmly fixed on its goals, and where the real power came from to fulfil them.

Beginning HCJB's Hospital Mission

Although Christian missionaries had been in Ecuador since 1896, there had never been a missionary doctor. In 1949, moved by the needs of the indigenous people passing by the station, HCJB opened a medical clinic and Indian hostel in rented premises. The packing cases in which equipment was delivered served as shelving and cupboards. It was the beginning of an extensive medical ministry.

In August 1949 an earthquake at Ambato, 115 kilometres from Quito, killed 6000 people and left 100 000 homeless. The little medical team who had just arrived assisted in relief work, while HCJB also provided communication links between the government, the earthquake site and the outside world. HCJB staff cared for orphaned children, helped build houses and assisted in other ways in the months that followed.

By the 1950s, HCJB's transmission site was relocated to Pifo, 27 kms from Quito, to cater for expansion. At its peak of operation, Pifo had 13 transmitters and 48 towers supporting 30 antennas, all beaming to different parts of the world. In 1965 the Papallacta hydroelectricity plant began providing electricity to power the Pifo transmitters.

During 1955 the mission opened a hospital in Quito called Rimmer Memorial Hospital and later renamed Hospital Vozandes-Quito (HVQ). In the same year a medical clinic was opened in the small township of Shell in the eastern foothills of the Andes, bordering the Amazon rainforest. The year 1958 saw the official opening of an actual hospital in Shell – Epp Memorial Hospital, later to be known as Hospital Vozandes del Oriente (HVO).



Hospital Vozandes del Oriente, Shell



Hospital Vozandes, Quito

Operation Auca Tragedy

In January 1956 an event occurred that became woven into HCJB's story in Ecuador – and changed the face of mission across the world.

God had placed a desire in the hearts of several young missionaries to share the Gospel message with the Waorani Indians, a small, isolated group of hunter-gatherers of the Ecuadorian rainforest. These people avoided contact with outsiders and had a reputation for violence, both among themselves and towards others. Few *whites* had made contact with them without meeting their death, and it is reputed that 60 percent of Waorani deaths in the 1940s and 1950s were due to murders. The neighbouring Quichua Indians called them Aucas, meaning *savage*, and the Jivaros, famous for shrinking human heads, lived in fear of them.

Nate Saint, a Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) pilot, began flying out from Shell surveying the Auca (as the tribe was commonly known then) territory from the air with the intention of finding ways to make contact.

In September 1955 Operation Auca was launched with the involvement of Nate, Pete Fleming, Jim

Elliot, Ed McCully and Roger Youderian, all young missionaries working within Ecuador. Over the next three months, Nate Saint and one or two of his companions regularly flew over the Auca settlements, dropping gifts of colourful beads, machetes, knives, pots and clothing.

Nate had come up with an ingenious invention. 'He developed a method of lowering a canvas bucket from an airplane in full flight into the hands of a person on the ground. This spiralling line technique as he called it, later made possible the first direct contact with the Aucas. A canvas bucket is let out behind the airplane on a line about fifteen hundred feet long. As the airplane goes into a tight turn, the bucket moves towards the centre of the circle – the drag of the cord across the circle overcoming the centrifugal force tending to throw the bucket outward. As the bucket moves towards the centre it falls until it eventually hangs almost motionless at the bottom or vortex of an inverted cone. Not only could the person on the ground receive mail, medicine and small parcels, but more importantly, could send messages or other things back to the airplane as the bucket is pulled up again.'⁶

The men also called out greetings in Auca using a battery-powered loudspeaker. The Indians, shy at first, were soon coming out into the open and waving in a friendly fashion. After a few deliveries of gifts, the Auca tied reciprocal gifts such as feathered headdresses and food items on the line. One day they attached a bark cloth bag that was squirming! It contained a live parrot.

By early January 1956 the men felt ready to make direct contact. On the 3rd, Nate made five flights to an open strip of sandy riverside in Auca territory that they had chosen as a landing site and named Palm Beach. The flights were to ferry in a

prefabricated tree house and basic supplies. Three of the men, Jim, Roger and Ed, spent two quiet nights in the tree house without any contact being made with their new neighbours. Nate and Pete flew in each day. On the 6th, a young Auca man and two women approached them, communicating in smiles and gesticulations. The next day no-one came. On each of his trips, Nate had been maintaining regular radio contact with his wife Marj back in Shell. On the 8th, as Nate flew into Palm Beach he spotted ten Auca men approaching the site, and at 12:30 pm excitedly relayed this information back to Marj. At 4:30 pm Marj turned on the radio for their prearranged contact. Silence.

Five days later a search party that included veteran Ecuadorian missionary Frank Drown, Dr Art Johnston from HCJB, HCJB missionary Jack Shalenko and 13 Ecuadorian soldiers, confirmed what five young women already knew in their hearts. Nate Saint, Roger Youderian, Ed McCully, Pete Fleming and Jim Elliot had all been killed. This event dramatically impacted the lives of their families, the mission agencies they represented and all other mission agencies in Ecuador, including HCJB. It spurred Christians all around the world to pray for missions and missionaries in a way they had never prayed before, and for Waorani Indians in particular. It inspired unprecedented numbers of followers of Jesus to decide to volunteer for missionary service.

Most of all, it impacted the lives of the Waorani themselves. Two years after the tragedy Rachel Saint (sister of Nate) and Elizabeth Elliot (widow of Jim) went to live with the Waorani at their invitation, Rachel spending many years among them in language study and evangelism.

Contact with the outside world brought the advantages of education, health care, a less violent lifestyle and opportunities to experience the saving

grace of God. Even some of those responsible for the young men's deaths later turned to God for forgiveness and salvation. But there has been a cost: exploitation, loss of territory, the introduction of western diseases including polio, the introduction of alcohol and its associated problems, along with loss of culture and traditions are but a few.



By the beginning of the 21st century, HCJB had also begun assisting in addressing medical needs in other parts of the world, especially in times of emergency. In 2005 medical relief teams went to Indonesia following the earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean, and also to Pakistan following an earthquake in the Kashmir region. In 2010 HCJB sent two emergency response teams to Haiti following the major earthquake there.

In 2011, the mission partnered with the Believers Broadcast Network in Sierra Leone to provide counselling and support to thousands of people still suffering in the aftermath of the 10-year Civil War that had ended nine years previously. And in 2014, the mission again partnered with the Believers Broadcast Network, this time in a relief and prevention project to assist those affected by an Ebola epidemic. Called The Bucket Brigade, a bucket containing food, soap, gloves, bleach and other necessities was given to families in isolation because of the disease. The contents of the bucket could maintain their nutrition and hygiene for several weeks. Partnerships have also been established in Ecuador, Africa, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and elsewhere, with local communities in clean water projects, mobile medical clinics and health promotion.

HCJB's purpose in providing healthcare had initially been to look after those in need by 'providing fully-equipped modern hospitals where all people could receive the best care, regardless of their race, social class or ability to pay.'⁷ Now that purpose has broadened. In fact, the mission manifesto now includes the statement, 'We refuse to watch people for whom Christ died suffer in pain and poverty when we can help restore them in His Name.'⁸

Global Hands Timeline

- 1949** Medical Clinic in Quito opens
- 1955** Medical Clinic in Shell opens
- 1955** Rimmer Memorial Hospital in Quito opens
- 1955** Palmer School of Nursing commences
- 1958** Epp Memorial Hospital in Shell opens
- 1960** Mobile medical clinics begin operation
- 1978** Training of interns commences at Hospital Vozandes Quito
- 1978** Community Development Department opens
- 1985** New Hospital Vozandes del Oriente opens in Shell
- 1990** HIV/AIDS clinic opens in Quito
- 2009** First African water project commences in Ghana
- 2013** Hospital Vozandes del Oriente, Shell, leased to another ministry



With the improvement in medical services in Ecuador, the mission decided running hospitals there was no longer the best way to be the hands of Jesus and fulfil its manifesto. In 2013 it began looking to transfer Hospital Vozandes-Quito to another entity, and Hospital Vozandes-Oriente was closed.



HCJB Television Studio, Quito

HCJB's communication ministries continued to grow through the second half of the 20th century and into the 21st. Through the middle of the 20th century the mission became more widely known around the world. Even 15 500 kilometres away, HCJB's radio signal was being heard in Australia. People there were listening-in, taking an interest, praying for and giving to support its work – even volunteering to serve in Ecuador.

Despite the closure of the shortwave broadcast site in Ecuador in 2009, some regional shortwave broadcasts from Ecuador still occur. Shortwave broadcasts are going into North Africa, which has satellite radio, internet streaming, and many partner radio ministries which include shortwave and tropical band, AM, FM, live streaming and so on.

Global Voice Timeline



- 1931** World Radio Missionary Fellowship Incorporated forms
- 1931** First radio broadcast via 200-Watt transmitter locally in Quito
- 1936** First medium wave transmission
- 1937** First shortwave transmission
- 1940** First 10 000-Watt transmitter in use
- 1949** *The Bible Institute of the Air* begins
- 1951** New transmitter site purchased
- 1959** HCJB brings television to Ecuador (world's first missionary TV station)
- 1961** HCJB print shop established
- 1965** Papallacta hydroelectric plant powers transmitter site
- 1968** First 100-kW transmitter in use
- 1972** HCJB first FM radio licences
- 1975** First satellite broadcast
- 1984** Christian Centre of Communication opens to provide media training
- 1985** HCJB pioneers World by 2000
- 1986** HCJB Engineering Centre opens
- 1991** First suitcase radio station produced
- 1992** Apoyo training for church leaders
- 2007** Name change to HCJB Global Voice and Global Hands
- 2009** Corrientes mentoring program preparing Latinos for mission established
- 2009** Shortwave broadcasting from Ecuador ceases
- 2013** Christian Centre of Communications closes
- 2014** Name change to Reach Beyond

In 2014, HCJB changed its name to Reach Beyond. Over eight decades, Reach Beyond has transitioned from a mission where we were the ones behind the microphone to one that is focused on equipping and empowering our partners to use radio to reach their own people (over 500 radio stations have been planted since 1992).

People around the world are also tuning-in to shortwave broadcasts from Reach Beyond Australia. This book tells the uplifting story behind Reach Beyond Australia and celebrates the many outstanding people who turned dreams into reality. It also follows the mission's work in Ecuador, Asia, India, Africa and other parts of the world. For those in isolated communities, it is a joy to hear one's heart (first) language coming over the airwaves. For those living away from home, this is also true. And for radio enthusiasts, it is a thrill to hear programs coming from distances one could only dream of. It's especially exciting for followers of Jesus when they come across Christian programs.