



BEYOND BORDERS

THE STORY OF REACH BEYOND AUSTRALIA

MARGARET A. PENFORD



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*To the glory of God who inspires and provides
and to the generosity and commitment of all those who have contributed and
continue to support the dream of reaching the unreached with the Gospel.*

Acknowledgements

‘We cannot make people come to Christ but we can do everything in our power to bring Christ to them’ – Dale Stagg, *HCJB News* December 2013 Edition 151

Beyond Borders is the story of Reach Beyond Australia (HCJB Australia). It describes the building of an international broadcasting facility against all odds in remote northern Australia and it's part in an organisation that has existed for over eighty years. It is also a story of people, many who are named in this book, but many more who are not.

It is the story of people who prayed, gave money, time and energy so that others might have the opportunity to hear a message of hope and it is the story of many who heeded God's call to serve in the mission field. We, at Reach Beyond, wish to express deep gratitude to the many hundreds of volunteers, staff and missionaries who form the cast of this story, especially those who dug up diaries and photos, wrote, emailed, phoned, sat for interviews and willingly shared their experiences so this book could be written.

It is also the story of countless listeners, most who remain unidentified to us but known intimately to our loving God who speaks to them over the airwaves.

We are indebted to authors Peter and Margaret Penford who compiled this book, and without whose timely efforts much of the story would have remained untold. Peter served with Reach Beyond Australia from 1999 until early 2015. Peter had previously worked in telecommunications until his early 50s when he experienced a clear call to take on the role of Studio Manager at Reach Beyond Australia's Kilsyth Studios. Margaret originally trained as a nurse but in more recent years managed The Bible Society Bookshop in Lilydale, Victoria and then an Opportunity Shop for Medical Mission Aid.

Margaret described her role with Reach Beyond as Peter's 'chief financial and prayer supporter'. Convinced that the story of Reach Beyond Australia needed to be told, Margaret and Peter volunteered for the task. Margaret researched and wrote, while Peter did a myriad of behind the scenes tasks, including early work on the book's format, until his failing health prevented further involvement. Sadly, Peter passed away on 19 August 2016 after a long illness. He is greatly missed.

We would also like to thank all those who contributed to the production of this book, especially to Professor John Clark for his encouragement and advice on the manuscript.

Special thanks must be given to David and Glenis Maindonald, who answered the call of God to come to Australia, leading the mission for twenty years and spearheading efforts to establish our International Broadcast Facility.

We also wish to express deep gratitude to God who directed the story. He has brought about the seemingly impossible so that men, women and children across much of the world might have the opportunity to know Him.

Dale Stagg, CEO

Foreword

As I think about the beginning of my involvement with HCJB Australia, as it then was, comments made to me such as ‘They’ll never get anything going up there in such a remote part of the state’ come to mind. And, of course, *they* didn’t – God did!

The remarks are strikingly similar to those made to Clarence H Jones in 1931 when he started spreading the Gospel by shortwave radio from a mountain in Ecuador against all advice. God convinced him that he was to ‘Come up this mountain’ and start the radio work in Ecuador, which has proved to be effective to this day. Similarly, God gave HCJB Australia the property in Kununurra to do His work, which He has brought to completion. Psalm 118:23 expresses our reaction to what has been achieved – ‘It is the Lord’s doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.’

From my first introduction in 1999 to David Maindonald, then Director of HCJB Australia, I couldn’t help but be impressed with the vision he had to establish a Christian shortwave radio station in Kununurra. Even by our first meeting, David had prepared a master plan for the way it would all be laid out, not only on the land wonderfully gifted to HCJB Australia but also on vacant government land on the western side of Packsaddle Creek which he hoped to secure. This has since become Lot 3000, now leased from the Western Australian State Government, on which the final facility is established.

Up until that time, I had only heard of HCJB in passing with no direct involvement and little concept of its activities. It didn’t take long, however, for David to educate me about HCJB and how the work could be expanded in Australia by developing a shortwave radio station in Kununurra. The more I came to understand and appreciate what could be achieved and how many millions, indeed potentially billions, of people could hear the Good News that Jesus loves them, the more persuaded I was that my wife Margaret and I should become more involved where possible.

Working with David, I came to see he not only had the God-given vision of broadcasting the Gospel about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the myriads of people in the South Asian, Asian and South Pacific regions from Kununurra, but also the energy, drive and dedication to see it come to fruition. This was despite the endless issues persistently raised to oppose its implementation, many of which would have daunted people of lesser faith, including at times, I have to say, myself.

With time constraints on the commencement of broadcasting imposed on the broadcast licences granted to HCJB, and potential significant time delays in getting hold of Lot 3000, David elected for the establishment of a temporary radio station facility on the land given to HCJB.

It was a privilege to use my professional training and experience as a town planner to help get the temporary project up and running; seeking, unsuccessfully as it turned out, to get the local council

to agree to the proposal. Never before had I thought that God might want a town planner to be involved in such a direct way with a project of this sort.

After the council issued its refusal we sought to persuade the Town Planning Appeal Tribunal of the merits of the proposal. Praise the Lord, the Tribunal upheld the appeal and approved the application. Construction of the temporary station was achieved with the first programs going to air in January 2003. There were tingles up the spine and a few teary eyes in the studios in Melbourne, where we were privileged to be, as the words of that first program went to air and the realisation dawned that at long last people in far off countries were able to receive the Good News of Jesus and His love from Australian shores.

During our trips as temporary workers at Kununurra, Margaret and I in company with many others remember the many answers to prayer that had been witnessed and how the Lord had so wonderfully provided people, finances and materials just when they were needed. A common remark was that 'someone should write a book to ensure that all of the Lord's wonderful provision would not be forgotten.' And here it is! The result of the many, many hours of diligent research and composition undertaken by Peter and Margaret Penford with contributions from many who have been involved in one way or another, great and small, throughout the project. We were deeply saddened that Peter Penford passed away just prior to the publication of this great work.

As you read the pages of this book you will find there have been some wonderful and miraculous ways in which the Lord has brought the temporary radio station and the final facility to fulfilment. Many of them will warm your heart as you trace the hand of God moving through the circumstances to bring about His outcomes. With so many people in lands where the name of Jesus is not known and where the Gospel message is not openly preached it is wonderful that the Lord is using this ministry to 'reach beyond' these human barriers. We may never really know the final impact of the original vision He gave but, as you will discover, it was and continues to be His work and He has brought it all to pass. Praise His Name!

Gordon G Smith

Preface

On Christmas Day 1931, Radio Station HCJB began broadcasting in Quito, Ecuador, to just six radios in the country. Since that time, Reach Beyond – as it is now known – has grown into a global media and healthcare ministry, partnering with local believers to start more than 500 Christian radio stations in over 100 countries.

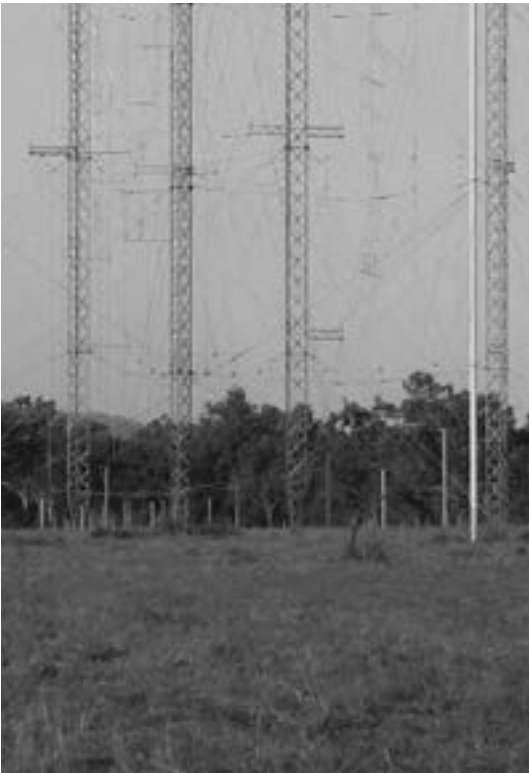
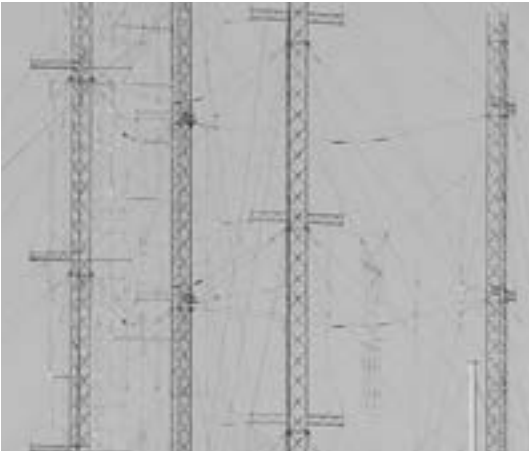
This book tells the story of Reach Beyond in Australia (which began with a single representative). Our story includes the beginning of the Australian office, the Aussies who have served the mission and God’s miraculous provision of the Kununurra shortwave broadcasting site that today reaches into Asia with programs in over 30 languages.

The purpose of this book is not to give a detailed history, but rather to show how God was at work in circumstances, people’s lives, even the decisions of government and governing bodies to bring about His purposes. Its aim is to bring honour to Him by showing His faithfulness against great odds, His provision, often miraculous, and His workings in and through His people.

This book can’t possibly contain every element of the story of Reach Beyond in Australia over the last sixty years (so many people have contributed) but we have tried to include scenes that will build an accurate picture for the reader. Like every organisation, they are not always a bed of roses. So too with this organisation. The purpose of this book is not to examine tensions, personalities or conflicts, but to remember a great story that God initiated through His people, a story that continues today.

Reach Beyond has been known by various names throughout its history including: Radio Station HCJB, The Voice of the Andes, The World Radio Missionary Fellowship, HCJB, and HCJB World Radio. In 2007, the world-wide organisation officially became HCJB Global (Voice and Hands), so in Australia, it was HCJB Australia (Voice and Hands). In 2014, the name changed to Reach Beyond. The name HCJB has been retained in Ecuador as the name of the local radio ministry that continues on in partnership with Reach Beyond. For the sake of clarity, we have chosen to simply use HCJB when referring to the historic overall mission and HCJB Australia when referring to specific ministry of and by the Australian office, missionaries, staff and volunteers (and likewise, since the most recent name change, Reach Beyond when referring to the global mission and Reach Beyond Australia locally). Where there is reference to specific entity names we have given the name in full with a commonly-used abbreviation at first reference and then used the abbreviation throughout the rest of the book.

We have used Australian measurements and currency, except where otherwise specified.



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