



## The Reverend Dr Bruce Kaye AM: An Appreciation

The current issue of the *Journal of Anglican Studies* provides the occasion for commemorating its tenth birthday. It is also the last number which will be prepared by the Reverend Dr Bruce Kaye which is in itself an event of considerable significance to the history of the *Journal*. The term 'editor' scarcely does justice to the part which Bruce has played in that history. His was the mind from which the whole venture sprang and his the hand that did more than any other to guide it through its first decade. Here, surely, is ample reason for evaluating the work he has carried out since 2003.

The establishment of the *Journal* needs to be viewed in the context of Bruce Kaye's objectives, particularly as General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Australia (1994–2004), to promote a fuller understanding of the part played by the Anglican church in national life and to raise its global profile. Nationally the church was too often marginalized by historians and others and globally there was a failure to appreciate its contribution to the Anglican faith. Bruce set himself to remedy these shortcomings in a number of ways. He organized annual seminars in Anglican theology, the history of Australian Anglicanism and Anglican Missiology. Aware that after existing in Australia for over 200 years the church still lacked a full-scale History, he developed ideas for a major book on this subject. Under his editorship he brought together a team of experts to carry out the necessary task. The outcome was *Anglicanism in Australia: A History* (2002), which filled a major gap in Australian historiography. Finally, Bruce himself a prolific writer, greatly enlarged our understanding of Australian Anglicanism through his numerous books, articles and occasional papers. The *Journal of Anglican Studies* took matters a stage further by shifting the focus from the national to the global.

These were the achievements not of one who possessed the backing of a university, but of a scholar who filled a key position in a divided church that was difficult to handle in good times and became more so with the passage of time. Bruce depended very much on his own resources and fortunately possessed the commitment, energy and drive to combine scholarship with administrative burdens. The *Journal* would scarcely have lifted itself off the ground had it not been for his determination to make it succeed. The task was daunting. Far from inheriting a well-established publication he faced the task of creating something new that would depend for success or failure upon its quality and appeal. Adept at selecting colleagues wisely, he built around himself a dedicated team which shared his goals and commitment. Each member of the Board of Trustees in his or her way contributed to the project and the same was true of successive Review Editors, who helped keep readers in touch with recent research. But central to all was Bruce Kaye. He lived with the *Journal* and played a key role in determining its content, contacting prospective authors and ensuring that articles were peer-reviewed and of a high standard.

In all this Bruce was helped by the fact that his horizons were unusually wide. His position as General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Australia brought him into contact with Anglicans of every variety from all over Australia. Earlier in his career he had studied at the Universities of London and Basel besides serving on the staff of the University of Durham. He established a widespread network of scholars and kept abreast of the research that was being conducted in numerous parts of the world. Two other points deserve mention. By training Bruce Kaye was a theologian but he had studied history at the University of Sydney and much of his writing was in that genre. To an unusual extent he combined the insights of the theologian with the skills of the historian and this influenced his own writing and approach to the *Journal*. Second, he was a man who before becoming editor had enjoyed the opportunity to develop and refine organizational skills of a high order. While at the University of Durham he had served as Vice-Principal and Acting-Principal of St John's College. In 1983 he returned to Australia to become Master of New College at the University of New South Wales, serving in that capacity for 11 years before transferring to General Synod. A skilled administrator with immense driving power, he was also an ideas man who developed new initiatives wherever he went.

These varied qualities set the tone for the *Journal* and did much to explain its success. Particularly important was the fact that Bruce thought of its content in broad terms. Interestingly enough it did not bear the name of the nation, in this way resembling the *Journal of Religious History* which first appeared in 1968. Unlike that *Journal* it was studies based, covering a wide range of disciplines and focusing on the Anglican tradition of faith and practice conceived in the widest sense. Admittedly, the stars of the Southern Cross appeared on the top right-hand corner of the cover and it was made clear that the *Journal* had institutional links with the structures of the Australian church whose primate was patron and metropolitans vice-patrons. Yet the *Journal* in terms of its focus was best described as being in rather than of Australia. Although its Trustees were Australian, its Editorial Board contained members from all around the world. Fundamentally it was directed towards the global communion. Indeed the word 'global', or 'globe' appeared 15 times in an editorial spanning two and three-quarter pages which appeared in the first issue. There were also other words, or phrases, which clearly indicated that the editor was thinking in such terms. 'We live in a time of global history' was how the second paragraph opened, providing a theme which was then elaborated upon. The basic idea was to provide a forum for the whole church and the global community of scholarship enabling contributors to engage in informed conversation about past and present issues of importance to Anglicanism worldwide. The timing was appropriate given that the church in the years between 2003 and 2013 found itself grappling with issues that threatened to tear it apart. The *Journal*, which owed allegiance to no 'party', provided ample opportunity for discussion to take place in a calm, dispassionate and informed way. What stood out was the *Journal's* comprehensiveness. Articles ranged widely across the field of theology and history, they were written by leading scholars drawn from a variety of cultures and, particularly towards the end of the decade, they shed valuable light on attitudes towards the divisive issues that some saw as threatening schism. Here in microcosm was the intellectual wing of the church engaging in conversation not only with itself but also with the world of scholarship.

The *Journal*, although global, fits well into a broader pattern so far as the Anglican church in Australia is concerned. Since autonomy was achieved in 1962 the church has confounded its critics by showing that it has matured to the point at which it is capable of revising its liturgy, producing new prayer books which bear comparison with those in other parts of the world, and contributing to the publication of hymnals, namely the *Australian Hymn Book* and *Together in Song*, widely recognized by experts as being of world standing. The *Journal of Anglican Studies* showed that within the church there was someone who, with the assistance of others, possessed the standing and found the means of establishing a *Journal* that has won recognition internationally. Its publication set the cap on Bruce Kaye's aims and achievements for Australian Anglicans. Gratitude is due to the founding editor whose aspirations for the Australian church have been realized in ways greatly to its benefit.

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1. Brian Fletcher was the Bicentennial Professor of Australian History at the University of Sydney and has published extensively on various aspects of the history of Australian Anglicanism.