

10-30-1973

## Interview of Claud Guild

Claud Guild

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/missions-history>

---

### Recommended Citation

Guild, C. (1973). Interview of Claud Guild. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/missions-history/53>

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by the Oral Histories at Scholar Works at Harding. It has been accepted for inclusion in Living History of Missions by an authorized administrator of Scholar Works at Harding. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@harding.edu](mailto:scholarworks@harding.edu).



## HARDING COLLEGE OF LIVING MISSIONS

Claud Guild from Australia interviewed by Van Tate

Tate: This is October 30, 1973. I am Van Tate, and I have with me Claud Guild. This is Vol. 5, No. 2 of our History of Living Missions. Claud, we're happy to have you with us today. I'll just ask you some questions, and you can just respond to them as you like. Would you give us a brief historical outline of your work from its beginning to the present time?

Guild: Well, Brother Tate, let me say first of all, it is good to be on the campus of Harding College. We have been related to the college here in that our son, who has preached with you, and King, who is a graduate of Harding, and our son-in-law, who is preaching in Washington D.C., is also a graduate of Harding. To your question in particular, I am from a Lutheran background and obeyed the gospel in Montana in the early '30's under the preaching of Brother J. C. Bailey. I attended the college in Idaho, but was encouraged by a woman from Arkansas to attend a Christian College, and I got a catalogue from Abilene. So, I graduated from Abilene Christian College. While there, and in studies like you're conducting right here on campus, I became interested in a more specific mission endeavor. I knew that I wanted to go back to the northwest, specifically, and preach the gospel, but I had an interest in world missions as well. Therefore, during 35 years that I have been preaching, we have spent 21 of them in mission work, and our latest endeavor has been the past seven years in Australia. We have done evangelistic work, or mission work, in every continent of the world but one, and that is South America.

Tate: Claud, What about the religious background of the people with whom you have been working.

Guild: In Australia, I think it is good for any of those that go there to realize that the name of God is not in the constitution of Australia. It was set up by political prisoners from England and under a prison situation. It was not compatible for Christianity. Therefore, religion in general is rather nil there. There is an apathy toward religion. The greatest religious background for the people, of course, is of the Anglican church that was brought over there. But, as they say, they only go three times in a lifetime: When they are hatched, when they are matched, and when they are dispatched. So, apathy is the great problem toward religion in Australia.

Tate: What about the cultural and economic background of Australia.

Guild: I think every American would profit to go to Australia for a while due to the background there. They have no clocks or calendars, and they get them out of the squirrel cage here, and the excitement of having to go as fast as we go in America. One thing I appreciate in the cultural background of Australia is the fact that they just don't care about material possessions. Therefore, they are just not up on fashions; as we think we have to be fashionable. We think we have to trade cars every two years. We have to have a telephone, screens on the windows, furnaces and air conditioning. Only one home out of ten would have a telephone. Two out of three families have a car. They don't have screens on the windows. They don't have furnaces. They do without these things. We have made luxuries, necessities in America. You can profit by going there and learning that you can strip back to being less materially minded by living in Australia. I like that about it. On an economic basis, they're retarded, permit that word, because 70 percent of them never go beyond the Junior level in school. There is no unemployment problem. So, as soon as they leave

junior high, they go immediately into trade school, into industry, and therefore, there are a few who have the educational background that we have here in America. You never heard of, in an international way, of any great people from Australia contributing to the literary world, or to the arts. They are great in sports, but beyond that, you just don't hear much of it. Therefore, with a poor educational background, the economy is retarded as well. They're back where we were about 40 years ago I'd say. Wages are poor, methods of developing the natural resources are very poor, and they are using Japanese and American initiative, money and know-how to do the things that need to be done.

Tate: What about some serious challenges that you have had to overcome in your work in Australia.

Guild: I think one of the greatest challenges we've had to overcome in this work is the apathy in Australia; to quicken within them a desire to want to know something about the Bible. It is strange, but true, we found more Bibles in India than we've found in Australia. There just aren't Bibles there. Another thing that was difficult to overcome, from a missionaries viewpoint, is that Australia is off the beaten trade and travel paths of the world. Therefore, you're suffering somewhat from claustrophobia in Australia on a mass scale in that when you are confined to that island, you are really isolated from the rest of the world. You feel that as a missionary.

Tate: What methods have you been using?

Guild: I'm glad that you mentioned that, because I thank God that in Australia, even though the name of God is not in their constitution, they haven't learned some of the ugly tricks that we have learned in America. They haven't expelled the Bible from the public school, and if you have academically qualified teachers, you can adopt a curriculum schedule, present it to the headmasters, and get to teach Bible in the public schools. This was our greatest thrust in preaching in Australia. In Brisbon, we brought over five families to help us. A former teacher at Harding, by the way, Sister Audene Baldwin, with a masters in Psychology; a graduate of Harding, Randy Baker and his good wife; Ed Gluber; Sister Ruby Kay Ellis and Sister Odell, and we were conducting 30 classes in 18 public schools in Bible. This was our greatest outreach to get to the people. We get to the young people and then we get to the families.

Tate: You mentioned in one of the classes this morning about using TV to some extent. What effect has this?

Guild: Yes, it was good, because, if you remember, some 25 years ago when television came in here, the newness of it was attractive. Television is very new in Australia. They only have black and white like we had here to begin with. I kind of like their national policy on it. They will not allow color television in until the last person in the outback can have black and white. They are going to share it with everybody. I believe, because of the newness of it, we had a great viewing audience, and in addition to that, it was not combative in that they could stay in their homes and watch, and look and listen. As a result, we made many converts through the television. It was very good.

Tate: What about your training of the converts there. Have you established a training school?

Guild: I know, you having worked in Africa, you know the value of this, and this was your thrust in Nairobi, and this is all important in Australia. One of our greatest disappointments has been in sending them to America and training them and bringing them back to work. I brought three Pakistan students here to Harding one time when I was with Fort Worth Christian College. There was Pupdi, Kidei and Pidei. Not from Pakistan, pardon me, they were from Thailand. I thought Dr. Benson was rather rude when I brought them up here. He wouldn't let me enroll them having had two years in a junior college and Harding a senior college. But as I've lived a little longer, I understand that Dr. Benson was 100 percent right. He said one of the greatest disappointments he had was bringing foreign students, and he had such an interest in oriental students, to America, and find that they either stay or go back only a little while and come back to America. This has happened to so many in Australia, but I'm glad to tell you now that Coy Roper, Dave Roper, Chuck Young and Jim Waldren, are the four full-time men, then preachers in the Sidney area, who are working with the McQuiry School of Preaching. We have a very splendid Preachers Training School there. On a more minor basis, we have had it going in Perth, Melbourne and Brisbon as well. We are trying to hold our men in Australia. There are exceptions. We sent a linguist from Perth, Hinerick Penchik, a Ukranian who knew Russian, Polish, Ukranian and Czech and many other languages, to Harding. He got his under graduate degree here, and he is in Toronto getting his masters in Russian now. We're developing a fine training program in Australia.

Tate: That training program is basically like our Leadership Training Programs here in the States?

Guild: Leadership Training and then like Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas, yes.

Tate: Now, what about the support of the national preachers. Are they receiving support from America?

Guild: This may seem strang to you, Brother Tate, but we are not training those men to believe that they can feed a cow in Texas and milk her in Australia and keep that backbone in tact. It's a long way to Australia. Therefore, we are training these men to believe that they can find employment and that they can preach, and there is a certain pride among Australian brethren. Like when we built a building in Brisbon, to secure it, these men signed unsecured notes with their signature to make possible that building rather than to get American money in, and amen to that. I might tell you that Brother Cubstead and Weldon Bennett, a professor in Abilene Christian College, prepared a World Mission Encyclopedia in 1959 and that would be some 14 years ago, and at that time we only had five preachers in all of Australia. We had twenty churches and 314 members. Today, we have 55 congregations, we have 50 preachers, not counting the ones in the preachers' schools, and we have over 15 hundred members of the church. According to Sunset elders in Lubbock, Texas, we are the second fastest growing mission field in the world. These churches are feeling their own power and strength. When I left Brisbon, the Holland Park church fully employed Tom Farley to take the work. We are teaching these men that if the local churches can't support them, there is nothing better for their ministry than to be tent makers. Some, understand, have been able to find American support, but we are not making it the rule. It is the exception.

Tate: What about your own problem of getting support to go into a foreign country.

have physical problems, visit one of our clinics or hospitals." And he told us how they had staffed those. They gave their boys and girls tuition free training in their medical schools who in turn gave the same number of years in the mission field as medical missionaries. In addition to that, when they are on the field, they call them home for an internship, or we would say a Seminar, to upgrade their quality of work. From that we could learn a great lesson, and I think our men should be called home often or on a regular basis to upgrade our work and we never reach that pinnacle. We strive toward it, but times changing, situations changing, culture changing, economic situations changing, we need to be recharged and we need to be upgraded in our work, and nothing would be finer than for churches to bring us home and have an internship for all of our missionaries on a regular basis.

Tate: What about the future of your own work. What are your plans?

Guild: Well, before we left Australia, one of our daughters wrote and said, "Well, daddy, you ought to come home now and settle in with a church and not make the bush anymore." But when we got on the boat and saw those 200 people gathered there singing and praying, we went to our cabin, and I give the credit to my good wife who has traveled with me through these ministries for 35 years, and she said, "Daddy, let's give it a go one more time." So my elders have grounded me for overseas service for two more years and they have searched out a field in Oregon, where there are a hundred and sixty thousand people and no church. They sent me there last April 22, and today, the last of October, we have 49 members now, and we've located four acres for us to build on. In those two years, I plan to get a building, and the Lord knows the rest of the future. We will want that to be a self-sustaining church, and I'm already homesick for foreign service. I can't see myself, at the age of 57, cutting out. I can't see myself selling insurance, or taking secular work thinking I'm not going to be taken care of in old age. I'm not going to cut out for social security. I just believe that nothing would make me happier than to carry me out feet first in this job of preaching the gospel in fields where it has never been preached. And that is my future.

Tate: Thank you very much Claud for that determination and for what you have said for us in the Living History Library.

Guild: Well, I made a fatal mistake one time, Brother Tate, of working six years as Vice President of Columbia Christian College and four years as President of a Christian College, Fort Worth Christian College, and to be a vice president, in addition to being over the vice problems of my college, your job is to raise money, to be a president of a college, you raise money. In those ten years of experience, I found some very wonderful brethren who had helped with those endeavors, and then having been in missionary work in the northwest and in Canada and Alaska, I built me up a clientele that has been very wonderful to support me. I've been 14 years supported by the Rosemont church in Fort Worth but from a working fund, for buildings, travel and all, I mailed this monthly bulletin. I would say to any that would play this tape, if you are planning to be a long-term missionary, it's very wonderful to have a regular printed, not mimeographed, but regular printed bulletin, to go to all of your constituency; even the individual members of the congregation that supports you, because there can be nothing better to raise and to keep your support than to keep your people fully, not only informed, but enthused and inspired. So, I haven't had too great a problem with support. It's been wonderful.

Tate: Another question along this line is a matter of keeping support, and I suppose from what you said, you haven't had a problem along this line. Some brethren, you know, really have some problems with keeping support.

Guild: Yes, and I haven't always been supported by Rosemont and I am a preacher. I don't necessarily like to make a distinction between being a missionary and a preacher. I always say I am an outside preacher. That is, I'm out of the country. We still have the same task, so, I don't bring an indictment against preachers generally. But, brother Tate, I want to call the shots just like I see them, and the greatest problems I've had, was when I prepared a paper for Otis Gatewood in the publication that he has internationally, Contact Magazine. He wanted me to write an article on how to keep a relationship between a supporting church and the missionary. In preparing that paper, I made a very general survey of this thing and I learned from most of the men in the field that one of the bottlenecks in keeping the support is the local preacher. Now they can get ready to build a new classroom building, or a fellowship hall, or some other thrust that helps their local situation, and one of the first places they want to clip is their missionary work. It has even been suggested by churches that have supported me that it would be easier to drop Claude Guild and support a preacher in Mexico because it would only cost \$75 a month. The elders were strong enough to tell preacher to wait a minute. Claude Guild gets a place self-supporting in five to seven years, and besides that, he gets the building money, Bible money, transportation money, TV money, outside the salary congregation. We can take on a Mexican preacher who could never get self-supporting for 25 years, and he needs money for land, building and everything and we pay that too. So, it's not going to be cheaper to get a Mexican. But I have found in my 21 years experience, the greatest bottleneck to sustaining support is an educational program for a local preacher. They'll clip you.

Tate: What would you like to say as a way of advice to improve our work in general, in missionary thrust around the world.

Guild: Brother Tate, I am so excited about that question. Let me, when you say around the world in our missionary work, also include this for our local work as well, I think it would be good for that. I was handed a directory several years ago by a medical doctor that did surgery for me, Dr. G.A. Woodroof, in Portland, Oregon, and in it he said, "We have a clinical hospital in every major city in the world. If you