



Baptist Historical Society of Queensland Newsletter

No 11 November 1988
Free to members

Membership: \$5 per annum
\$8 family \$20 corporate

PRESIDENT: Rev. Dr David Parker
26 Hall St Alderley Q 4051
Phone 3569331

SECRETARY: Mrs. E. Chataway
11 Bunda St Slacks Creek 4127
Phone 2082639

FAMILY HISTORY

Family histories have now become a popular pastime for Australians. So, in this issue we are presenting some information that may be of help to readers who are interested. Some of our members who have made some progress tell their stories and there is some information about organisations and other useful resources.

Along with other similar organisations, the Baptist Union Archives receives many requests from people wanting information to complete records about their family. Unfortunately, we usually have to disappoint enquirers by replying that we are not able to help.

This is so for two main reasons - one that Baptist churches do not usually keep the kind of records that supply information necessary for family histories. Apart from the denominational periodical, most records are church and deacons' meeting minutes, financial reports and membership lists. Compared with some other denominations, this is very meager. The second reason is that the Union Archives are mostly the repository of the Baptist Union and its departments. There are very few records from churches or families. (Another reason is, of course, there is no full-staff to do research)

To give an idea of the contents of the Archives, portion of our entry from the Register of Church Archives (published by the Church Archivists' Society) is printed on the back page. Keep it handy if you or your church are thinking of sources of information. It might put you on the right track from the start.

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RECENT ARRIVALS*GROW IN GRACE: NUNDAH BAPTIST CHURCH CENTENARY HISTORY*

Nundah Baptist Church has sent us a copy of their centenary publication, called GROW IN GRACE, produced for the celebrations of the great event in July 1988. It is a simply produced work of 48 pages of typescript, with a number of illustrations mostly grouped on "photo pages" towards the end. The cover shows the church as it now is and most of the photos are comparatively recent.

The author, Patricia Magee, (BHSQ member) is to be commended for putting together a readable history of this important church, complete with documentation of sources and helpful lists of pastors, church officers and those who have entered full-time service from the church. She has traced the pre-history of the fellowship from the German mission in the area in 1838 and members of other churches (such as Wharf Street and Jireh) who had a hand in the earliest witness.

The church itself was commenced in July 1888 thirteen members of Jireh decided it was time to establish a separate cause, doctrinal issues being a factor in the decision. Later that year, the new fellowship decided to purchase the building belonging to the Fortesque Street church which was having troubles maintaining itself. The structure was removed to the Chapel Street site and opened officially in June 1889. It is now a Masonic Hall and will in the future become an office for a political party!

The church was to pass through difficult times in its early years, with problems due to changes in leadership and the creation of a breakaway church nearby. Several outreach ventures in surrounding areas and promising ministry opportunities did not grow as anticipated.

It was not until the ministry of Rev. A.G. Weller around the time of the Great War that the church began to stabilise. It was his outstanding ministry as a Military Chaplain that led to the decision to erect a Soldiers' Memorial Church. This project helped to draw the church fellowship together and to give it purpose and direction. After many anxious moments, due to cost factors, the new building was opened on August 4, 1923.

The story continues with the events of the depression years and the Second World War with the church coming into its greatest strength in the later years of the 1950s. Outstations and new churches were fostered at Banyo and Wavell Heights, and some time later, Stafford North. Meanwhile, a fire in the church in 1955 was nearly the end of the building. As the minister of the time, Rev. Sam Lane said, "It was nothing short of miraculous that the fire was halted and we discern the intervention of God in answer to prayer."

Peak membership of the church was in excess of 200 in 1947 and again in 1968, but the successful growth of outstations and changes in the local area meant that numbers began to shrink. But nevertheless, as the centenary approached, the church's activities and interests continued to be maintained and even expanded with missionary programmes and various outreach ministries, indicating that the dynamic of the gospel is still a factor to be reckoned with in this age.

FROM THE NSW BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Recent issues of "The Baptist Recorder" have carried summaries of important lectures given at meetings of our sister Society in NSW.

"The Place of Religion in Early Colonial Australia"

The June 1988 issue carried a report of the lecture given by Prof. Kenneth Cable of Sydney University on "The Place of Religion in Early Colonial Australia." It was a fitting topic for the annual meeting in the bi-centenary year. As such, it was appropriate that Prof. Cable should have raised for discussion some of the traditional ideas about the nature of Christian life and witness in the earliest days and presented some new, positive insights.

He suggested, for example, that despite the degradation of the penal colony and the extreme conservatism of established Christianity, there was a virile and highly effective expression of evangelical faith alongside of the official church structures represented by the Anglican and other major churches.

This more personal and intimate form of Christian life was found especially in the LMS missionaries, the Methodists and the Baptists. In fact, he pointed out, some of the most distinctive aspects of this section of Christianity were the ones which survived into the future and became the basis for Christian witness in the following years.

"Alexander Gordon, MA - a Christian Gentleman"

Another interesting topic to receive attention was presented at the August meeting by Rev. E.R. Rogers on the life of Rev. Alexander Gordon, founding principal of the NSW Baptist Theological College. Mr Rogers, himself a former principal, has added to his previous work on Princ. G.H. Morling a fascinating study of a man who has almost been forgotten, but who "deserves better treatment." Mr Rogers said, "All available evidence supports the view that he was greatly gifted man of absolute integrity. Dedicated to Christ he strove for excellence in everything he did and in that quest he would not compromise."

The paper outlines his work at the college and its earliest days, and sympathetically tackles the problem of why Mr Gordon resigned from the college (and later from the Baptist church) after a relatively short ministry, concluding that it was "a complex of factors" including especially "the subtle one of ethos".

EHA *LUCAS* EHA

A recent arrival on the scene is the Evangelical History Association, based in Sydney, which is a group of people interested in fostering work in areas related to historical research and the understanding of history, especially from an evangelical perspective. It has created a magazine, known as LUCAS (after the author of the third Gospel and Acts, perhaps the first Christian historian) which is now up to issue number 4, and held its first national conference in Canberra in September 1988. For enquiries and membership, write to Secretary, EHA, Box 252, Home Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006.

FAMILY HISTORIES - HELP IS AT HANDBOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

One of the most useful little books to get you started on the task of doing your family history is called "Compiling your family history" written by Nancy Gray (publishers - ABC)

This is a 36 page volume tightly packed with basic, easy-to-follow guidance and where to begin and what to look for at each stage along the way from the beginning to the finished product.

There is a section dealing with the types of records that are available (together with official addresses of government and other departments) and notes on the various groups of immigrants to this country including availability of such items as shipping records, death certificates, baptismal documents and marriage registers.

The final parts of the book give addresses of genealogical societies and other useful contacts in Australia and overseas, together with some advice on how to preserve and present the information you have so painstakingly collected.

Given some good leads, this book with its practical emphasis on just what to do may be all the help you will ever need! (Although some will find help in a book like Joanna Beaumont's "How to write and publish your family history" published by Orlando Press in 1985, which has useful material on technical matters like printing, production, promotion and actually writing up your story.)

But if you are having trouble finding information, watch out for Nick Vine Hall's "Tracing your family history in Australia." Sub-titled, "A guide to sources" and published by Rigby in 1985, this major work of 324 pages is by an acknowledged expert in the field. (It usually sells for around \$25, but you may find it on special at less than half that price!)

After a brief introductory section, the book has a lengthy chapter on each state in Australia with an overview covering such topics as historical background, population, immigration, birthplaces of the population and religious make-up. Each chapter then gives lists of places where records may be found, and detailed descriptions of types of records to look for.

In the section on Queensland, for example, which extends to about 30 pages, there are notes on major repositories such as the Genealogical Society, the Family History Society, Registrar-General's Office, State and Australian Archives and the State and Oxley Libraries. Then follows information on such items as census returns, cemeteries, land records, newspapers, photographs, maps and family Bibles - in short anything that is likely to be of use to a researcher.

The appendix contains details about family histories already published (which might save a lot of effort!), a lengthy bibliography and addresses of libraries and archives.

As the cover information states, "This book is a 'where to go' to trace Great Aunt Amanda rather than a 'how to do it'." If such a book is needed, this one will be worth every cent you spend on it.

SOCIETIES SOCIETIES SOCIETIES

Most family history researchers would also gain a great deal from the resources of two societies with research centres in Brisbane. Basic details are provided below and full information can be obtained from the officers in attendance.

Essentially, these groups offer meetings, expert assistance and libraries with an enormous amount of raw material and, importantly, indices and other finding aids. They are funded by membership fees, so be prepared to pay for the privilege! Some facilities are only open to members, while others may be accessed on a "fee for service" basis. Both have connections with similar bodies elsewhere which helps in gaining access to further resources.

Genealogical Society of Queensland Inc.

Telephone (07) **397 2164**



Hon. Secretary
Queensland Family History Soc.,
Post Office Box 171
INDOORCOPILLY. Q. 4068

RESOURCE CENTRE:

2nd Floor, 329 Logan Road
STONES CORNER, Brisbane

CORRESPONDENCE:

HON. SECRETARY,
P.O. BOX 232,
STONES CORNER, 4120
QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

AMONGST THE BRANCHES

by Helen Smith

As sometimes happens when one is moving about on a branch of the family tree, one meets with a relative doing the same thing. This happened to me while in England in 1980-1 through a letter received by my mother and forwarded to me. This much-removed cousin and I, with our respective families, met and had a most interesting day. From that meeting, I found that much of the work I was doing had already been done, and so decided to climb to another branch.

Some work had been done on the ancestors of my maternal great-grandfather, but we had come to a full stop in Australia. I spent a profitable afternoon at St Catherine's House in London. At first I was not able to find anything helpful, but knowing from rumour that there were army people involved, I found that there was a special section for children born to army personnel. It was so exciting to find the picture begin to take shape. One could trace the family's movements by the places where the children were born - towns and cities all over the world. However, again I seemed to come to a standstill.

Now the family name of Fallick was an unusual one, and the rumour in the family that their origins were in the Isle of Wight seemed to bear some investigation. So I consulted the phone book to find that there were several people of that name listed. Choosing one at random, I telephoned. The woman who answered told me she had been a widow for years, but that her brother-in-law would be delighted to hear from me. So began for me an exciting time.

I travelled to the Isle of Wight and was met at Cowes by a relative whose name of Charles had been well used in my family. Charles and his wife went to a great deal of trouble to ensure that I made the most of my time, seeing as much of the island as possible and especially those parts connected with my family.

I was able to visit the local records office and obtain a great deal of information. The reason we had come to full stop was that the Christian name of my great, great grandfather was wrongly entered on a death certificate - a very important lesson for me. I now never accept any information unless I can verify it and am suspicious if things do not tie up as they ought. Another important point to keep in mind is that children who died at birth or in early childhood often had later brother or sisters who were given the same name, which is very confusing for us who come some generations later.

Legend has it that the Fallicks were smugglers from the continent of Europe, possibly France, shipwrecked near Brook Cave on the Isle of Wight. I was taken to a delightful point on the coast line and shown a piece of land known for centuries as Fallick's Plot. The first record I could find for the family was one relating to a document about a piece of land, presumably this one, and a Joan Fallick dated 1490. The name of Fallick crops up all over the island. I was taken to various graveyards, chapels and old houses connected with the family, as well as to meet many relatives.

There are lots of stories I could tell, but probably the most interesting was of a young man named William Fallick who volunteered

as a seaman in 1795 at the age of 19. He served on H.M.S. Bridport, and was present at the famous Battle of the Nile. I was shown his medal which is, of course, unique and priceless. It has three bars, one for the Battle of the Nile, one for the Battle of St Vincent Bay, and one for St Croix.

The man who owns the medal is a connection of the family, and showed me a plan of the Battle of the Nile and how the ships manoeuvred and the part played by H.M.S. Orion. I felt a part of history! This connection of the family is also a connection of James Hammett, one of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, who was transported from Dorset to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) in 1834.

I was fascinated as various members of the family show me the medals and trophies they had been awarded for rifle shooting. My grandfather and his brothers had just such a similar collection back in Australia. Obviously, a hereditary trait!

Unfortunately, time prevented me from doing the research necessary to connect all the English branch to the Australia branch, but hopefully this can be accomplished at a later date. In the meantime, I can enjoy correspondence with a whole host of new relatives, one of whom is about my own age and even bears a resemblance to me.

COMPUTERS COMPUTERS COMPUTERS

If you have a computer, you may find that some of the genealogy programs will help you keep track of your family tree. There are quite a number now available, either as regular commercial packages costing a reasonable sum or as "public domain" software at a modest outlay.

Generally, these programs are designed to run on an IBM compatible computer (or a "clone"), but if you own another brand, ask around for suitable software, especially if it is one of the more well known ones like Apple or Commodore. You won't get full value from your investment unless you also have a printer to print out your material.

Using a computer to keep track of a family tree makes it easy to store, edit, review and print out the information you have gathered in your researches. Of course, you have to transfer it from your notes into the computer, and this may be somewhat tedious! But once you have entered it in, it is there to be worked on as you wish.

Typically, genealogy programs allow you to store information about each individual in a separate record which can be reviewed and modified at will. Then you can record links between various members of the families, and again, these can be modified as necessary. The software will probably also make provision to record general notes of a miscellaneous kind. Then you can display it on the screen in chart or note form, and list it out on paper using your printer.

The computer will also be useful as a word-processor and desk-top publisher for writing and producing your family history booklet if you have suitable software. So, as Joanna Beaumont says in her book, "Genealogists with a personal computer are indeed fortunate! For those thinking of buying a system, there is probably no better time to write that cheque."

FAMILY HISTORY OUR WAY

Del and John Parker

Our experience of discovering and recording family history started where all such history starts, with ourselves and our living relatives. It has developed from that point. We have been interested for many years in the histories of the communities where we had lived and it was a natural progression to become interested in our own history.

The two histories, family and community, are linked strongly in a family such as Del's where four generations lived in the same city, Gympie. Much information could be found in local records and by talking with relatives and others living in the city. The first step was to record all known data about the immediate family, e.g. names, relationships, dates of birth, marriages and deaths, occupations and places of living. People recalled many memories, especially when it was possible to make repeated visits after obtaining recollections from others. After some false starts, this data was recorded using standard forms of the type provided in genealogical books. In this way, additional data could be sought and entered readily at a later date.

In addition to recorded material, we also made use of information from memorabilia. Most families have a range of old books, letters, documents and photographs which are invaluable. A family Bible passed on through the generations may have many names and dates, e.g. the Fletcher family Bible given to John's great-grandparents is fascinating reading. Regrettably such Bibles are often hard to find and must be handled with great care because of their physical condition. Sometimes also the entries are not completely accurate and should be checked against other records. Family photographs, where they have been suitably inscribed with names and dates, are interesting and useful sources of documents.

We, like other researchers, have made use of sources outside the family. The most obvious of these are the certificates obtainable from the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages. With careful selection of the certificates obtained, we have found many useful pieces of data which have illuminated family links and provided information of change of place of work and residence. One example is how Del discovered from various certificates that one family moved from South Queensland to Rockhampton and then to Toowoomba, all of this well before good roads and modern transport existed. Causes of death have shown the dangers of life, e.g. lung ailments were very common among underground miners on the Gympie goldfield. The other source of information we have found useful has been school records. The published histories of schools frequently include early enrolment records. They are an abundant source of family names for which we have been thankful as we followed successive children in a family through a local school.

Newspapers are also a fascinating source of family information. The most obvious section is the classified notices of births, marriages and death (and memorial notices if you are late in reading the paper). We have located some relatives through these notices and have made new

friends by contacting them. However, the paper also contains the names and stories of many people who live their day-to-day lives in the community. Our most interesting find was for Del to read in "The Gympie Times" of her great-grandfather, Thomas Whitmore, and two sons who left Gympie in 1893 to travel by horse and bullock teams to Kalgoorlie, W.A., via Charleville and the Nullabor Plain. The story of this 2-year journey has been retold in the Bicentennial publication "Unsung Heroes and Heroines". I followed up an undated newspaper clipping to obtain the story from St John's Ambulance, Bristol, England, of my great-grandfather, Rufus Parker, and his devoted honorary service over many years at an age when most men withdraw from public life. You may even find a relative, or yourself, in such a mundane report as that of a road accident, as I did.

We have added much to our research and to our lives by our links with distant relatives who are researching the common family lines. Del writes to a much "removed" cousin (who has become a good friend). He has access to different people and memorabilia. The shared research has benefited both sides, as well as sharing costs of such items as purchased certificates.

We have enjoyed a similar contact with an English gentleman who is researching a common name. He advertised in a genealogical publication his interest in the surname of Del's maternal grandparents, Bradford, from the same area of Ulster. So far, we have not found the common ancestor we had hoped for, but we have shared a friendship and much interesting information about ourselves and the small area of Antrim where both families originated. A bonus has been the information about my father's childhood home city of Manchester where he lives.

Our family history is enlarged considerably by researching sideways to include as much as possible of the present-day generations. We have included, for example, our grand-parents' brothers and sisters and their descendants. In many lines of the family there are three living generations. A Fletcher family reunion in 1987 included two men who were sons of 19th century migrants and others who were fourth and fifth generation descendants of their father's older brother - a fascinating contrast in generations.

We have tried to add personality to our family history by collecting photographs of deceased relatives, especially the older generations. Being able to copy photographs for ourselves has made this easier and more enjoyable. We have also tried to collect data about their occupations, where they lived and worked and the churches, schools and other buildings that were significant to them. Photographs have helped to make some of these places more real.

Our family history is still far from complete as so many earlier ancestors are still unknown to us. We have found that it might be comparatively easy to research back to the generation that migrated to Australia, though there are still many questions we'd love to have answered. Going beyond that generation becomes much more expensive in time and money as the original sources, if they still exist, are in some other country on the other side of the world. The existence of microfilm records in many Australian libraries has helped us and many others, but does not remove the problem.

We have enjoyed our ancestor-hunting and the friendships that have come from it.

B.H.S.Q. COMPLETES ANOTHER YEAR

The annual meeting of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland was held at the Baptist Archives on Saturday afternoon, November 5th with nine members present. The Society began in 1984.

In reviewing the year, the secretary, Mrs Ellen Chataway said in her report, "Given that this has been the bicentennial year of our great country, it would have been gratifying to present an annual report brimming over with such a comment as the psalmist's, The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. We do acknowledge with thankfulness that there have been significant happenings within the scope of this Society, but disappointments, too, particularly with regard to the lack of tangible interest shown by our Baptist folk generally.

On the positive side, we have gained some new members and attendance at the three meetings held has improved. Several booklets outlining the history of a church (especially at a centenary or other such milestone) and of prominent Baptists (Mrs Thelma Howard, Rev. E. Keith) have appeared, some by BHSQ members. This is an encouragement in that one feels that the aims of the Society are at last coming across to our fellow Baptists.

Dr Parker continues to produce and distribute the Newsletter of the Society. Responses have been encouraging.

Our Focus on Spurgeon night at Nundah Baptist Church was well attended. Dr Craig Skinner winsomely presented the highlights of this amazing man, his life and ministry. Rev Paul Harrison, a Spurgeon's college man, chaired the meeting, and about 50 interested people had their appetites whetted to learn more. BHSQ member Pat O'Leary ably supported Dr Skinner in recounting something of one of Spurgeon's outstanding men, Rev William Whale, first in England and then in Brisbane at the City Tabernacle.

The display board was again used to attract the interest of people at the 1988 Assembly, gaining one new member as a result."

The Chairman, Dr David Parker reported generally on his work as Union Archivist, which is often taken up in responding to requests for information about family and church histories. Usually very little can be done to help people seeking information about their families, although occasionally it is possible to refer people to the local church where records may happen to be available or people are still living with information to share. During the year, the position of Honorary Union Archivist was set up on a regular basis.

Dr Parker also mentioned that there are some students and others undertaking research projects involving Baptist history. The archives are often used for these purposes. He also continues his involvement with the Church Archivists' Society which publishes a regular newsletter and now has several books in its collection.

The Society ended the year with a credit balance of \$208.98, income being gained from membership subscriptions and the main expenses being production of the newsletter. It was decided to leave membership fees for 1989 at the old level of \$5 single, \$8 family and \$20 corporate. The existing officers were re-elected.

Enlisting your help with

B.H.S. PROJECTS

One of the useful and valued functions of a Historical Society is to develop the resources related to its area of interest, and to make them available to those interested in working with them.

The Archives of the Baptist Union now have a basic index making access quite straight forward, although much more work needs to be done to sort and catalogue material. Help is needed to complete this task.

Another type of useful material is the listing of commonly required information. Some of this has been done already by various people. For example, Rev. John White has given basic details about ministers of churches and statistical information in his official history, A Fellowship of Service. Many local church histories do the same for their own fellowship. Then the Union Yearbooks have given useful details since 1909 and before that some information is available in the monthly periodical, The Queensland Baptist.

Mr G. Hobbs has compiled information about Baptist Church buildings which is available to us, and our member, Rev. D. MacPherson, has tabulated a good deal of information about churches and ministers.

A continuing project which BHSQ is working on is a more complete listing of information about ministers, trying to establish which ministers have served in Queensland, their dates of ministry and any other details such as college of training. Much of the information comes from Year Books and the Queensland Baptist, but it requires a good deal of time to find and record it. Help is also needed to bring this work up to a useable level of completion.

A new project for which we are now seeking the help of members and churches is to build up a list of "prominent Baptists" which will be useful to researchers and Baptists generally. By "prominent" Baptists, we simply mean Baptists who have taken a lead in public life as politicians, community leaders and the like over a reasonably long period of time or who in some way have made a contribution to community life outside their own church fellowship. James Swan, who featured in the last BHSQ Newsletter, is one such person. But there are bound to be many more whose story may not be so well known.

It may be difficult to decide who qualifies for inclusion, so it is best to list all who may be thought to be worthy of inclusion rather than to exclude some. It will be much easier with people of earlier generations, so this is perhaps the best place to start, especially before all memory of them is lost forever.

How can you help? All that is needed is to write down the following details for each person on a separate 6" x 4" card and send it to the Archivist for filing:

Name; address; any basic personal details available such as date of birth, family; church attended; achievements (e.g., Shire Chairman 1920-40); source of information for later follow-up.

Information need only be brief and basic, unless you want to do more!

BAPTIST UNION ARCHIVES - MAIN CONTENTS
 (From "Register of Church Archives")

Accessibility:

Records are available to bona fide researchers/students of Baptist history, at the convenience and discretion of the limited Church Head Office staff and Honorary Archivist.

Appointments are necessary and made preferably initially by letter. Older records (19th C.) are generally available, but could be further restriction on more recent material, depending on particular nature and proposed use.

No fee is charged for search, but photocopying and phone calls are to be reimbursed. Donations are acceptable.

Holdings:*Special Comments:*

Archives are in the process of development under care of honorary archivist. Some other records are available at Oxley Library (William Street, Brisbane), Baptist Theological College (179 Gold Creek Road, Brookfield, Qld. 4069), and also at Mitchell Library, Sydney.

Correspondence:

Includes extremely limited number of personal papers of Church leaders; general finance.

Baptist Union of Queensland: Minutes of Executive Council, Assemblies and Committees/Departments 1877 onwards, correspondence and general records.

Publications:

Baptist Union of Queensland Year Books/Directories 1907 onwards; Queensland Baptist Jubilee Record Volume 1855-1905; Baptist Union of Australia Handbook 1929 onwards.

Photos:

Collection is only preliminarily indexed as yet.

Other:

Assorted records of some individual churches, including minutes of Church, Diaconates, Committees, Centenary/Jubilee Booklets, Denominational newspapers:

Queensland Freeman 1881-1888

Queensland Baptist 1890-1913; 1923-1925, 1951 onwards.

Finding Aids:

Available on premises only — card index.

Non-Paper Records:

Sound: Reel to reel tapes.

Cassette tapes.

These are of addresses given at Assembly Meetings.

Postal Address:

P.O. Box 55, Broadway, Qld. 4006.

Location:

225 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane, Qld.

BHSQ MEMBERSHIP

Individuals, churches and other groups are invited to support the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland by becoming members. Membership subscriptions are the only regular source of finances. Members receive the BHSQ Newsletter, and are able to join in the Society's activities and have a good opportunity to contribute to its historical work.

Unsigned articles in this Newsletter by the editor, David Parker.