



# **Baptist Historical Society of Queensland Newsletter**

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Free to Members

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**PRESIDENT:** Rev. Dr David Parker

26 Hall St Alderley Q 4051 Phone 356 9331

**SECRETARY:** Mrs. E. Chataway

11 Bunda St Slacks Creek 4127 Phone 208 2639

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## **CLIFFORD HOUSE AND BAPTIST CARE FOR THE AGED**

On Monday, July 23 Grange Baptist Church was the venue for the 1990 Annual BHSQ Presentation focusing on Clifford House and Baptist Care for the Aged. About 25 people participated in an interesting evening of inspiration and information, both orally and visually.

One of the featured speakers, Miss Emily Lord, a former Matron of Resthaven was unable to come due to illness, but her paper was ably presented by BHSQ Secretary and fellow nurse, Mrs Ellen Chataway. Former chairman of Community Services, Mr Max Lockhart, gave a masterly overview of developments in the unfolding vision of Baptist care for the aged in Queensland. Both papers are reproduced in full in this issue of the BHSQ Newsletter.

Keith Denham and Audrey Thomson on the staff of Community Services had prepared a fascinating visual presentation which provided an eye-catching view of the story. It consisted first of a video version of a colour movie film taken at the opening of Clifford House when it moved to the Ascot address, with a professionally prepared audio commentary. Then there was a selection of slides, with audio sound track, illustrating the development of Baptist Community work from the beginnings up to the present, including the voice of the late Director, Rev. C.L. Miller. Community Services intends to put the slide series on video as well.

Altogether the evening was informative and full of interest. So sincere thanks is expressed to the presenters for their most significant contributions. Further thanks is expressed to the pastor and members of the Church for their efficient preparation and warm welcome on the night. Grange was chosen as the venue because it is just down hill from the original Clifford House (today known by its original name of Farrington House).

To mark the occasion, Baptist Community Services produced a special card depicting the original Clifford House. It is reproduced (in reduced size) elsewhere in this issue for readers unable to attend.

## A MATRON'S VIEW OF AGED CARE

by Emily Lord, Former Matron, Resthaven.

Although I don't know a lot about Clifford House, I can speak generally from a matron's point of view.

I relieved in Clifford House for a month in 1964 while Barbara Kissick was on holiday. It was only a 12 bed Nursing Home then, and only a small staff. One thing I did not appreciate was the long flight of internal stairs.

I enjoyed my work at Resthaven. I went there in fear and trepidation, but Matron Neville had set up a very good regime which was easy to follow. The Senior Sister at Chermside with whom I worked, had given me very good advice, "Don't rush in to change things. Sudden change, and too many changes at once, disturb older folk." It was sound wisdom.

The main aim of a Home must always be to make it a home away from home, otherwise it is just an institution. I believe we attained that goal in Resthaven - the atmosphere was that of a big caring family, happy and for the most part, content.

As a result, there were very few arguments. In a community there will always be minor upsets over niggling things such as moving pot plants, taking slips from garden plants without permission and so on. But there were scarcely any really disruptive arguments. One was caused by a man who still suffered greatly from being gassed in World War I, so I didn't blame him for his lack of patience. I used to think I had a really wonderful group of people.

One needs to remember they are the older generation and must be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. In return, for the most part, they will co-operate and then all runs smoothly. One of the points I always made when employing staff was that honesty and kindness to those under their care were characteristics I looked for, and any violation would ensure a speedy departure.

In a Christian home, both kindness and honesty must be hallmarks, or it is no witness to the love of Christ. Surely that must be one of the objectives of operating such a home. Also, when these folk have been through the trauma of breaking up their home and disposing of many treasures, losing any of their remaining possessions would add further trauma.

There must also be integrity on the part of those who work in the Nursing Home, for the well-being of the patients depends on them. All patients must get adequate fluids, especially on hot days; helpless patients must be fed - and many cannot ask for it if they are missed. There must be regular care for the prevention of pressure sores and other needs. Without integrity, many of these necessary tasks could be passed over and would cause distress for the patients.

Some who applied for a nursing position were completely raw recruits, and needed to be taught the basic skills of nursing. Shortly before I retired, the Homes Board asked Matron Olive McAllister to prepare a set of lectures for those on the staff of Baptist Homes. Much was learnt in

the course of duty, but for the rest, suitable roster needed to be arranged to fit the lectures in.

Besides the general care, something must be done for the mental well-being of patients. For this, an Activities Director was appointed. Some activities were organised to give physical movement such as ball catching and quoit throwing, which help to keep some muscles more flexible. A large snakes and ladders board on the floor and a big home-made dice they could throw created activity and interest. For mental activity, they had word-making from a long word of topic interest such as "Exhibition Day" or "Christmas Day". There would be discussions on subjects such as holidays or a day at the zoo, cooking and so on. Patients would be invited to make a contribution from their own experience, thus activating memory. At times the response was good - but there were some who showed little interest. One morning a week there would be a devotional session and often someone from the units would assist.

One very worthwhile activity at resthaven was our Percussion Band. Even some of the stroke patients with only one good hand took part, while one man, almost blind, really went to market with the tambourine, as he remembered the Salvation Army bands he had played in. All enjoyed the sense of accomplishment it gave them, as well as enjoying the music. It was good re-motivation. Even those who did not take part, enjoyed watching and listening. One year we decided they were good enough to be part of the Family Fair program.

For those in the hostel situation and also the unit guests, there are many activities - various types of needlework and handcrafts, ceramics, pottery, carpet bowls and croquet; games such as Scrabble, Canasta and bridge, chess and so on. There was also a good library. Besides these, there were bus trips, concerts, slide shows and many other activities to keep people occupied.

A few years before my retirement, there was move towards re-motivation of patients. A lady went to the United States for training, and on her return started putting her new skills into action at Sunsetholme. It evolved into a training course for all who could take it. I can say little more about that, except that the course gained praise and recommendation from various sources.

When at a home in West Australia during an inter-state Community Services Conference, I saw an outline of their Restorative Nursing Program. It required the liaison of the doctor, physiotherapist, Activities Director, and nursing team who set their goals, which are reviewed every two months. The whole program would require an adequate nursing staff, and a physiotherapist on staff. This calls for adequate finance too!

On admission, everything about the patient is noted on the history sheet - sight, hearing, speech, use of limbs, balance when sitting and when standing, the extent of the need of aids such as stick, walking frame or special eating implements, and so on. There interest in the surroundings and other patients are also noted. Diversional therapy was prescribed and the result recorded regularly. Restorative exercises were conducted in class or singly; bus trips were arranged for Nursing Home patients, and many other activities. It seems to me such a program requires much documentation, but would be under control with adequate staff.

One problem these days is the care of Alzheimer's cases. In most Homes there is an enclosed area where they can wander at will; even so, I think there must be some sort of program to try to help them. One thing I would emphasize is the need for the family to continue visiting them. They may not be able to converse or take much interest, but if the family do not visit, they become restless and hard to manage, as though they know something is wrong even though they don't know what. It is easier and less frustrating for the family if two visit together rather than alone.

One other matter I would like to comment on. Recently I saw over a new Nursing Home prior to opening and saw there were no multiple bed wards. Personally, I favour having some two bed and some four bed wards. It is convenient for staff to have several together when they have to take a trolley with all their needs. But quite apart from staff convenience, it is also an advantage for certain patients too. Life can be very lonely in a single room. When they can no longer move about and perhaps cannot hold a book or do anything, they need an interest. There is more coming and going in a multiple bed ward, so they don't feel so alone. I know some relatives feel bad about having a loved one in a four bed ward, but it is better for some patients - after all, they are not in solitary confinement!

There was an old lady in a single room at Resthaven when the tornado hit. She was saved from serious injury because of that very need to have something to watch. Windows broke in the ferocity of the wind, and a sliver of glass blew over to catch in her pillow and then it swerved over towards her face. She was watching the movement past her door, so that she didn't move her head towards the window. Had she done so, the glass would have gone through her cheek. When there is something to do, they watch every movement.

Other things could be said, but let me close with just one other thing. Clifford House and other Baptist Homes have been established to show Christ's compassion by providing a place of living for those who need a home where help and security are available. We believe they have been provided at His bidding. Therefore the work going on in each is God's work. So there must also be the readiness to meet the spiritual need of the guests. For this reason chaplains have been appointed in each Home; church services are held each Sunday and during the week also by other denominations. Daily devotions are also held.

There will always be an emergency situation arise somewhere, like the time the Director did not arrive to lead the communion service - he hadn't written it into his diary! When phoned, he said, "I'm sure the Matron can take it". She did, with the help of a few other women, one of whom had her notes prepared for her turn in leading devotions! Another emergency, when a man started the day by saying to the night staff, "Pray for me". He was a Christian who thought he had no further need when he went to Resthaven, so attended neither church nor devotions. But he suddenly realised he was out of touch with his Lord. Someone did pray for him; his need was met and his last month of life was spent in such serenity, staff commented on the change in him.

(Continued on page 8)

## A VISION FOR AGED CARE

by Max Lockhart, Former Chairman, Community Services

The task of the historian is to study the past. The relics of the past consist mainly of traditions, folk tales, works of art, archaeological objects and written records. The historian makes use of primary sources consisting of documentation produced contemporaneously with the period which he studies. Of less reliability but nevertheless important are those secondary sources consisting of the writings of those who have studied the primary sources. The historian who studies more recent events will sometimes have available the account of participants who are able to make available their oral testimony - the things they did, saw and heard. Oral history may sometimes contain inaccuracies due to failing memory, undue emphasis and exaggeration. We tend to remember the highlights and sometimes the failures.

As a participant in the events we shall cover tonight, I am permitted to forget some things, perhaps even to exaggerate, although I assure you I shall talk about the things I remember and any inaccuracy will be entirely accidental. There will be some who may remember different aspects of the same occurrences in a different way. This is the price that you must pay if you listen to this oral source. There is inevitably a certain lack of objectivity which as historians you may deplore.

If history is to have any value at all, its events must be interpreted. As an Historical Society, you may take the view that what you learn from your researches is no more than interesting - something which satisfies curiosity but does no more. On the other hand, it may be that history has meaning and purpose. Now that I have passed into the history of Baptist Community Service, I should like to think that those who are presently engaged in that work and those who will follow them may find in the recounting of past events some lessons for the present and the future development of the work to the glory of God. If that were to occur, this appearance tonight of ghost from the past may make worthwhile their emergence from the mist of earlier times.

I have noticed in passing that the editor of the June edition of the Baptist Community Service Newsletter has fairly well upstaged me by printing the history of Resthaven. I did not think she would be present tonight, but I may say that her reliance upon primary sources only has led her into at least one error when she records that the Miller Terraces were opened in 1985 by Senator D. J. Grimes. The error is understandable enough, but it just did not happen that way. His name was on the programme, but he failed to come. I presided at that opening ceremony and the minister was represented by Mr Manfred Cross!

Our first venture into Baptist Community Service came in 1949 when Clifford House at Alderley Heights was opened. Sixteen aged folk took up residence in an old home on a hill top position. In 1957 the present Clifford House at Ascot was acquired to provide for an increasing aged population. The home was run by a committee and a superintendent filled real need.

Those were the days when it was becoming fashionable for aging people to move into accommodation in homes for the aged. I remember some ladies who took up residence at the age of 60 and went on to spend a substantial period of their lives at Clifford House. Since that time

other types of retirement village accommodation have been provided. Attitudes in the community have changed and the views of government to funding assistance have likewise changed. In the intervening years, the age on entry into old peoples homes has substantially increased.

The Clifford House Committee worked well in a limited sphere. I joined the Baptist Homes Board in the late sixties. The Board at that stage had no specific work of its own and no authority in relation to Clifford House. The Board however did have a vision of what Baptists could do in community service and its members began planning the establishment of Resthaven on its present site at Brookfield on land given to the Baptist Union by Dr Dart. Clifford House then as now had its firm supporters and the committee worked hard.

I think it is fair to say that there was a feeling in the committee that Brookfield was too far from the city and that any further home for the aged would detract from the denomination's interest in Clifford House. Dr L.G. Knott became chairman of the Clifford House committee and under this patient, wise and visionary leadership, the committee was steered in the direction of the Homes Board and the two bodies charged by the Union with the direction of its social work merged their efforts.

Resthaven was planned with great care. We balanced as it were on a knife edge with scarcely enough finance to proceed. When building was shortly to begin, the Baptist Union appointed Rev. C. Louis Miller as the first Director of Community Service and secretary to the Homes Board. He came with little knowledge of the task, but through study and experience he became a highly skilled and efficient executive officer. I worked with him over many years and found him to be a dedicated, conscientious and caring servant of God.

Resthaven was opened on a Saturday afternoon in May 1972. It was a thrilling occasion with more than 1200 people present. From that time onward until well into the 80's, there was scarcely any period of time when the Baptist Homes Board was not planning or building some new project. As the work grew, so did our finances. There was a real and growing need for aged care and for the care of children. There were long waiting lists to enter our homes, and it was difficult to keep up with the demand. I well remember Rev. Frank Stone, the General Superintendent of the Baptist Union, who sat as a member of the Homes Board for many years both before and after his retirement, suggesting to us that new developments should be slowed to enable Louis Miller to consolidate his work and renew his strength. It was easier said than done! There was much to be done, and we had a commitment and enthusiasm to expand.

Speaking for myself, I found our Board meetings in those days to be happy occasions with Christian fellowship at its best. There was a oneness and harmony on the Board that were a pleasure to experience.

Baptist Community Service did its share in the establishment of Family Group Homes for children under the care and protection of the Children's Services Department of the Queensland government. In 1969, Kunara, our first Family Group Home, was opened at Toombul. The money came from the sale of land at Yeronga which had been held by the Baptist Union for several years. We were asked to advise the Union whether the Yeronga land should be used for the establishment of a Baptist

Grammar School. We opted for homes for needy children instead, and the land was sold. In 1970, we built Wongabeena, a Family Group Home at Townsville, and in 1972 the year of the Resthaven opening, we purchased Bindari Lodge from a Roman Catholic Sisterhood, and used it for the accommodation of girls who had grown too old for Family Group Homes but still needed a place to stay.

Bindari Lodge provided my first meeting with Mrs Gollan, who subsequently became the house-mother there. She came to see me at the suggestion of Rev. Norman Mergard to tell me of her great desire to establish a home for girls who at a critical time in their lives were likely to be homeless and in moral danger. I told Mrs Gollan that we should like to help, but that we had no money. This seemed to present no problem to her and soon we were as dedicated to finding ways and means as she was.

The Board had adopted a policy of establishing children's homes only in areas where the local church was prepared to undertake a pastoral role. In addition, where the local church indicated interest, we asked them to contribute funds towards the capital cost of establishing the home. Each of our homes for children and young people were established in this way. In the case of Bindari Lodge, the South Brisbane Church undertook the pastoral work and assisted with capital funds. I shall never forget Mrs Gollan's gracious ministry to the girls of Bindari Lodge. Many of those who lived there have cause to thank God for every remembrance of her.

In 1974 we bought Locheil Nursing Home at Coorparoo. We bought this privately-owned nursing home with government assistance and a loan from the Baptist Union of some \$90,000 which we repaid in approximately half the time allowed to us by the Union. Locheil was purchased to be a hospice for the dying. So great was the need at the time that they used to say that no bed was ever cold. A vacancy in bed occupancy in the morning was invariably filled in the afternoon. Locheil was a nursing home for extensive care patients. The concept of a place to die was not well understood at the time, but Locheil served a most useful purpose since the time when ownership passed to the Baptists.

In 1978 a group of folk who were struggling to keep Sunsetholme operating as a home for the aged asked us to take over their work rather than letting it be closed down. The old building was a relic of the last century and was in incredibly bad condition. We accepted the challenge and established a fine set of buildings on the site. Sunsetholme is the answer to those who think Resthaven is too far from the city.

Wahroonga at Rockhampton and Illoura at Beaudesert were opened as Family Group Homes in 1974 and 1975. In 1977, Talera Lodge, a hostel for teenage boys, was opened at Greenslopes. In 1980, Kara Units for deserted one parent families was established at Annerly, and Hassall House, a shelter for homeless young people at Bald Hills was purchased.

During the 80's, self-contained units for the aged were built at Rockhampton and expansion programmes were undertaken at Resthaven and Sunsetholme. I think some of our best developments were established at Resthaven in the form of Carey Court, self-contained units, the Carey Nursing Home at the peak of Resthaven's 26 acres and the Miller Terraces on the hillside opposite the Baptist Theological College of Queensland.

Over the years, the Baptist Homes Board received much financial assistance by way of bequests, gifts and loans from people who had an interest in the work. There is no doubt that many individuals have given generous support to the work. As a denomination, however, we have failed to give financial support to community service. The support of the work through the Outreach Budget has always been remarkably poor. Baptists do not seem to place a high priority on the support of those in need in the community. Even where we do provide support, our motivation must sometimes be questioned. Financial support for work amongst children has never been particularly strong.

By contrast, the work amongst the aged has attracted a higher level of giving. Could it be that we tend to support that end of social service which holds most promise for ourselves and our own future? It rather reminds me of the old man, a resident of a home of another denomination who provided funds in his will and directed that they be applied towards providing more toilets for old men. I think that Baptists should give greater support to work amongst children and deprived or homeless young people.

At the time when Locheil was purchased, the minister of one of our churches wrote to the Executive Committee of the Baptist Union questioning whether the church should be engaging in social work. It seemed to the writer that our efforts in community work were injurious to the purpose for which the denomination was called - to preach the gospel. I believe that today there would be few who would be critical of a caring ministry. It seems to me that there should be a balance between evangelism and what is substantially a pastoral ministry. Clearly Christ thought it important to visit the sick, to care about those in prison and to provide for the poor.

I believe the work done over so many years by Louis Miller was important in promoting the confidence of the denomination in community work. Such was the respect in which he was held by the denomination as a whole that those who would otherwise have questioned our direction were comforted by his support for it. We had a close association in the work over many years, and I recall the joy with which he told me on occasions that he had led some aged resident to Christ, or that some of our young people had become Christians. Both of us have now passed into history. Thank you for giving me this opportunity tonight to emerge for twenty minutes to dwell on the past.

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#### A MATRON'S VIEW

(Cont. from page 4)

Another wonderful ministry began when one woman went to the Nursing Home each evening to have a time of devotions with her friend. Others saw it and asked her to spend time with them. When her friend passed away, she continued with the others. So it continued for a few years. I know of at least one decision for Christ through that ministry.

These days, matrons have a great deal of government paperwork to do, but each and every child of God can have a part in the work at the Homes. God is love, and all who know him must share that love, letting it flow through in every aspect of life. May his love continue to be seen in each of our Baptist homes, that therein his Name might be glorified.





Souvenir of 1990 Annual Presentation Baptist Historical Society of Queensland  
*"The beginning of Baptist Community Service work in Queensland"*  
THE ORIGINAL CLIFFORD HOUSE - ALDERLEY HEIGHTS 1949

**BHSQ**

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Baptist Historical Society will be held at the Baptist Archives in the basement of 225 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley on Saturday November 3 at 2pm. All members and prospective members are welcome to attend. Please bring a plate.

## **"YOUR LOCAL CHURCH HISTORY"**

The four page BHSQ guide to preserving and using local church historical records has been circulated to all churches in Queensland and to historical societies in three other states. A copy is enclosed with this mailing for readers' interest. More are available from the BHSQ if they can be profitably used.

## **OOPS! . . . . correction**

In the last issue of BHSQ Newsletter, No 15 dated April 1990 featuring the Christian Endeavour movement, the article on p 11 should have stated that the CE motto is "For Christ and the Church". Sorry about that!

## **CITY TABERNACLE CENTENARY**

The 135th Anniversary of the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, the mother church of the denomination in Queensland, and the Centenary of the opening of its building were celebrated together in a week of activities August 4 - 12, 1990. Guest speaker was Dr Michael Griffiths, formerly General Director of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship and recently principal of London Bible College. A 25-page commemorative book was published for the occasion, as well as an attractive order of service. The booklet contains a review of the ministries of the pastors who have served the church from the beginning as well as an outline of the original building project. There is also an account of the various activities of the church, both at present and over the years. Copies of the booklet are available from the church office, 163 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane 4000 at a cost of \$5.00.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

Future planning will be on the agenda at the Annual Meeting (see above); we welcome contributions from members and friends. There are a number of projects in hand which require more assistance to see them through. We are still requiring help with our "prominent Baptists" project and also our Ministers' File - both of which will be valuable for researchers. We have heard of a number of students and others working on research interests, including a history of youth camping in the state and some biographical and local church historical projects.

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