

The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland
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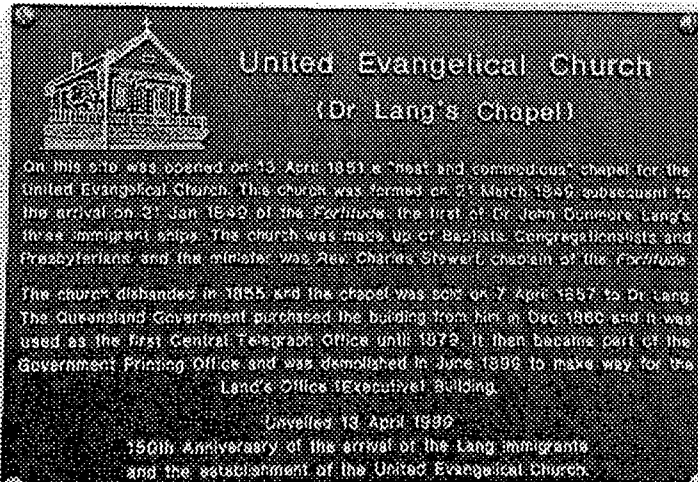
Rev. Charles Stewart and the United Evangelical Church

The 150th anniversary of the United Evangelical Church (UEC) was successfully celebrated on 1 May, 1999 with a dinner and service at the Ann St Presbyterian Church. There was a full crowd for both parts of the function which involved participation by speakers, musicians and leaders from all three denominations which were part of the original UEC – Baptist, Congregational and Presbyterian. Positive responses were received from those attending, indicating that the celebration was well received.

One interesting feature was the singing of a hymn specially written for the opening of the first Baptist chapel in Queensland and other hymns associated with the Lang migrants who arrived in Queensland on his three chartered ships, *Fortitude*, *Chaseley* and *Lima*. Pictorial displays showed many of the leading figures, places and events associated with the church. A book, incorporating an address on Dr Lang's vision for Queensland and the story Charles Stewart and the UEC was published. Several pictures were taken and a tape recording made of the event (available from Sound Words ph 07-3379 6835)

Earlier a plaque was erected on the old Executive Land Administration Building to mark the site of the UEC chapel. This was dedicated in prayer by the President of the Baptist Union of Queensland, Bill Gynther, at a function which took place on the same day and time (11am on April 13) as the first use of the chapel in 1851.

Also on May 1, a reunion of families which are descendants of Lang migrants took place at Mt Gravatt Showground. Several of these people also attended the thanksgiving service. The committee organizing the reunion function unveiled a plaque on May 2 in Captain Burke Park, Kangaroo Point to mark the arrival of the Lang ships.



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Tragedy and Hope

A Study of Two Pioneer Colonial Pastors

Part 1 Charles Stewart

by David Parker

A paper for the BWA Heritage Commission, Durban, July 1998
Published in *The Baptist Quarterly* Vol XXXVIII No 2 April 1999 pp 91-102

I Horton College

In 1842 James Voller, a former apprentice pawnbroker from South Parade Baptist Church, Leeds, completed his studies at Horton College. He immediately took up the pastorate of the newly established church at Salford, near Manchester, where he was reported to be "discharging his ministerial functions with very exhilarating prospects."

The next year, Charles Stewart, a young Scot fresh from the University of Glasgow, began his training at the same institution. Just as he was about to finish his course, he received an urgent call to Zion Chapel, Newhall Street, Birmingham; it was regarded as a "highly desirable" field of labour so he proceeded immediately to what he expected would be the beginning of a life time of fruitful ministry.

Although Voller and Stewart¹ were both students of the same college, there is no indication that they ever met. They were men of vastly different backgrounds, circumstances and personality, but in time, both made their way to Australia and served in Brisbane, making distinctive contributions to Baptist work in that centre in ministries that were tinged with tragedy and hope. In the case of these two at least, their college (later Rawdon and then Northern Baptist) was "the dwelling place of wisdom, of manly piety, of zeal and learning" even if its buildings made it seem like a "dingy Academy".²

Stewart was the first to reach Brisbane, where he opened up a work which paved the way for others who followed, including Voller. But Stewart was also the first to conclude his ministry, retiring in ill health after only a few years, and then dying a short time later while still young. Voller lived on into old age, seeing the dawn of the next century and active to the end.



Horton College

II Charles Stewart

Unfortunately, little is known about Stewart before he came to Horton. Born in about 1820 the son of a "collector of money", he was a native of Edinburgh; he had an older brother, Robert and two sisters, one named Elizabeth. Robert, who became a Presbyterian minister, was disappointed that his brother had become a Baptist, probably the only family member to make the change. Charles pursued a course of classical studies at the University of Glasgow from 1840 to 1843, although he did not formally graduate. While in that city, he may have associated himself with the Hope Street Baptist Church, sponsor of the Glasgow Baptist Educational Association, which supported him at Horton.

He was a keen and serious student with a good mind, and benefited greatly from his general and theological education. When the opportunity came during his last months of study to lead the church in Newhall Street, he gladly accepted it, commencing his ministry there by mid-1846. But it was to be short and traumatic. At about the same time, the famous Chartist, Arthur O'Neill, was baptised and became leader of a congregation in nearby Livery Street which transformed itself into a Baptist church. By late 1847 or soon after, this group had merged with the Newhall Street church, ousting Stewart and leaving O'Neill installed as pastor, a position he occupied for 50 years. Stewart, badly hurt by the episode, withdrew (possibly with a number of the members) and began preaching at the Toll End Baptist Church, Tipton. This little known but substantial church had only been formed in 1840 as a branch of the Dudley church. It received autonomy in 1847 and was admitted into the local Baptist Association in 1849; but it decayed rapidly after that and was soon virtually forgotten.

It was here while he was "dispensing the ordinances of religion to a Non-conformist Congregation in Staffordshire in England" that Stewart read in the new evangelical newspaper, *The British Banner* an article by the enterprising but controversial Presbyterian minister, Rev Dr John Dunmore Lang, from Sydney, New South Wales. He was in Britain at the time organising an ambitious emigration scheme aimed at securing an "extensive and continuous stream" of "industrious and virtuous" Protestant settlers to develop the Moreton Bay district in the northern part of the New South Wales; he especially wanted these migrants to take up cotton farming to pro-

vide British factories with an alternative source of this product thus undercutting the evils of slavery on the American cotton fields.

But Lang was even more concerned with "Popery and Puseyism" ("The Beast and the Image of the Beast") and thus his migrants were to offset extensive Irish Catholic immigration and the growing power of the Anglican establishment. He had, however, so far failed in his efforts to recruit a chaplain for the first of his ships, and Stewart's enquiries came at the right time for him to fill this need. Stewart had no pastoral prospects in Britain, and many of his acquaintances were already making plans themselves to emigrate; it was even suggested that his congregation at Toll End should make the move as a body. Although Lang was seeking a Presbyterian chaplain, he felt that Stewart's personal qualities together with his Scottish background made him acceptable, especially in the pioneer situation of Moreton Bay.³

Stewart sailed on the *Fortitude* in mid-September 1848 and arrived in Moreton Bay in January 1849. Lang organised two more ships which arrived later in the year, bringing a total of more than 600 people, whose social, economic and political impact on the district was enormous. Moreton Bay had been established as a penal colony in 1824; transportation ceased in 1839 and the area was thrown open for free settlement in 1842; by the time of Stewart's arrival the population of the whole area was around 2,000. Anglican and Catholic churches were operative, and the Wesleyans had begun activities only a year before. The most numerous Protestant group, the Presbyterians, had no minister or church; Lang had promised to find a suitable man for them, and with the arrival of the *Fortitude* expectations were high that the promise would be honoured. But in his publicity through the *Banner* and in personal contact with the Stewart and the migrants who came from several different Protestant churches, Lang had also advocated that in the initial stages at least that a united church be set up on a "broad and Scriptural" basis; he even suggested basing it on the principles of the Evangelical Alliance, which had been formed in England only a couple of years earlier.

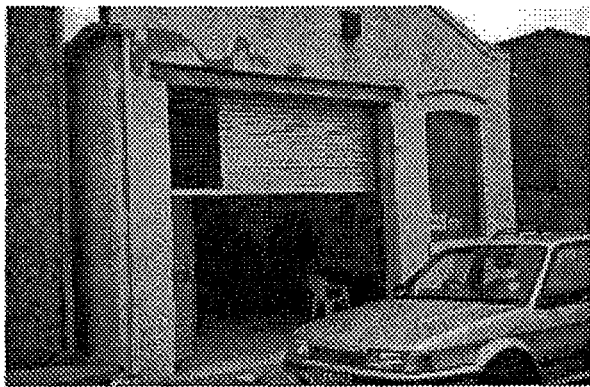
It was a difficult situation that faced Stewart as he stepped ashore. There was, of course, no church organi-

zation and no chapel, but he was told in no uncertain terms that because a Presbyterian had been expected, there was no ministry available to him as a Baptist. To make matters worse, his elder sister who had accompanied him as his house-keeper left after a few weeks "in high dudgeon". Stewart wrote in desperation to Rev. John Ham, one of the few Baptist ministers in the country, then pastor of the Bathurst Street Baptist Church in Sydney; he had once been minister of the Newhall Street Church, and proved to be an effective counsellor in the months that followed, although his health was fragile and the 600 miles that separated them remained a barrier.

Meanwhile, Stewart commenced united services for Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists in Brisbane and also in nearby Ipswich using the Court House in each place; he soon won the approval of the community for his fine preaching ability and his pastoral dedication. A church was formally organised which, reflecting the majority interests, was styled in general terms as the "United Presbyterian Church" indicating that it would serve all denominations. In view of his background, Stewart was recognized as an "acting Presbyterian minister" although his status as a Baptist minister was respected. There was an understanding that there would be no proselytisation; in any case a Presbyterian minister residing in the town for health reasons was able to perform infant baptisms when required.

But Stewart made some unguarded public statements expressing sympathy for a Presbyterian rather than a Baptist church structure. This slip arose out of his bitter Birmingham experience and reflected his feeling that Baptist "ultra-democracy" could be detrimental to the best interests of the ministry, but it was misunderstood by some of his congregation as indicating genuine Presbyterian beliefs. Ham was also concerned about Stewart's leanings, but unnecessarily so because his Baptist convictions were strong; even when his sponsor, the powerful Dr Lang, tried to persuade him to switch allegiance and join his Presbyterian Synod, he told him that he could be "nothing else" but a Baptist. So in writing to Ham, Stewart expressed the hope that he would not be regarded as a "Heretic" in regard to Baptist churchmanship.

Initially Stewart entertained Ham's recommendation that instead of remaining in Brisbane and work to establish a pioneer united church, he should seek the pastorate of the well established and liberal minded Melbourne church, recently vacated by Ham. But within a few weeks he found the people more responsive, and after his Birmingham experience, he remained cautious of entrenched denominational loyalties. So he came to the firm belief that Moreton Bay was his "path of duty" and committed himself fully to this work. He took up the idea of a united church on Evangelical Alliance principles with considerable determination, and began to work out a formal basis for it, especially in view of the prospect of obtaining land in key areas of the town for chapels and schools. He firmly maintained his Baptist convictions about congregational government, believers' baptism and the function



Toll End chapel where Stewart probably preached just before sailing for Moreton Bay (now a workshop)

of confessions of faith and worked them into his proposal for the church, although paedobaptism would also be retained for those who conscientiously followed this understanding of Scripture.

But then strict and powerful Presbyterian elements in the congregation who wanted exclusive recognition of the Westminster Confession as the basis for the church and a "thoroughly Presbyterian" minister began to exert their influence. So in case his ideas did not win approval or a "thoroughly Presbyterian minister" arrived, Stewart approached Ham once more about moving to Sydney and working with him there in establishing a new Baptist cause.

However, after discovering the church was unable to qualify for government land grants and a tense period of negotiations, Stewart's proposal for an Evangelical Alliance church was accepted overwhelmingly by the congregation. The strict Presbyterian element felt aggrieved and withdrew, forming their own denominational church in December 1849. It struggled for some years, but eventually grew into a virile work, although relations between it and Stewart's group were often uncertain.

This left the Baptists, Congregationalists and the remaining Presbyterians who were voluntarist in belief to press on with the purchase of land and the erection of a chapel. This was a slow process, due to governmental bungling and fierce opposition by the Puseyist Episcopal Bishop, whose own scandalously underdeveloped church site was very near to the prime block chosen by Stewart's committee. Nevertheless a "neat and commodious" building seating 400 was successfully opened in April 1851.

But Stewart's ministry was attracting a surprising proportion of the population, and now that Lang's immigrants were becoming a powerful force, they included some of the most influential members of the business and political community. Stewart himself generally shared their views on subjects such as separation of the district from New South Wales, cessation of convict transportation and the abolishment of state aid for churches; he took his place in the public life but he was careful not to appear as a political parson. His main concerns were spiritual, where he sought through biblical preaching and pastoral care to advance the highest levels of personal commitment and piety on the part of the members of his congregation.⁴

But the high standards Stewart imposed upon himself and his church exacted a heavy toll. He took his responsibilities seriously and found it difficult to cope with opposition; he was hurt deeply when people did not reach his expectations for them. So towards the end of his third year, he suddenly found himself in bad health. He could no longer preach and after a few weeks rest in Brisbane, departed for Sydney with his sponsor, Dr Lang who was returning home after a visit to Moreton Bay on political business.

In Sydney, Stewart made contact with Ham after a long break, but any hope of a lasting friendship was cut short by Ham's death, which left the Sydney church pas-

torless. Stewart received good medical treatment, but by August 1852, prospects of a severe winter and urgent pleas from his congregation, (who wanted him with them even if he could only preach once a month) made him return to Brisbane. Grateful that he had been "hired again" by the Head of the Church and sent "to labour in his vineyard" after "standing idle in the market place for a whole year", Stewart threw himself into his work as much as his throat, lung and stomach problems allowed.

Over the months that followed, his condition varied, and he was faced with some serious pastoral problems; he was even pursued over petty matters by the daughter of his doctor (he was also his church secretary) and a troublesome friend of hers. It was all a great test of Stewart's faith, but he maintained and even expanded the ministry of the church; he came to realise his "utter dependence on our Almighty Arm" and found to his delight that he was enjoying as never before "the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

But suddenly it was all over. Stewart had thought of ways of easing his load - by finding an assistant or turning to school teaching. 1854 had commenced normally, and he had been busy for most of the time. Yet at the end of the year, he sold up his books and possessions (but not a block of land) and left the colony on 3 January 1855; there were no farewells, presentations or announcements about his plans!

After a few weeks in Sydney he sailed to England, and undertook a course of hydropathic treatment at Dr James Gully's celebrated clinic in Malvern, Worcestershire. When this proved too expensive, he moved to a similar institution in the Savoy region of France and then on to the Pyrenees (not far from where the visions of Lourdes would appear a year or so later). Here he lived quietly during 1856 and 1857. With his health still poor, his other sister, Elizabeth, brought him to her home in Bermuda where she lived with her husband, Archibald Hall, Quartermaster of 26th Foot Regiment (Cameronians). Here he died on 2 March 1858 at the age of 38 years, and was buried the next day by the chaplain of the Regiment.

At his departure from Brisbane, the church Stewart had fostered for six years was in crisis. The foundational years when a united fellowship was possible were over and in a context of significant economic and political advancement in the district, denominationalism was rampant. Within two or three weeks, a decision was made by the congregation to split up and sell the property, but the trustees were opposed and there were legal problems in the way. First one group and then another tried to gain the ascendancy and set up their own group in the chapel. In the end it was the Baptists under the enterprising leadership of Rev. Charles Smith from Parramatta, NSW who organised their own church in August 1855, although using other property for their meetings. There was some Congregational participation in this fellowship but their church was not set up for three more years.

Meanwhile, a Presbyterian minister in fellowship

with Dr Lang, Rev. Thomas Bell, had gathered the remaining members of the United Evangelical Church in the old chapel, and eventually transformed them into a regularly organised Presbyterian Church. After further legal and personal complications, the chapel was sold in 1857 and the proceeds made available to the three denominations as originally agreed. The building became the town's first Telegraph Office and then part of the Government Printing Office before being demolished in 1899 to make way for further government buildings.

NOTES

1. This paper is based on the author's *James Voller: Pioneer Baptist Minister of Australia* (Baptist Historical Society of Queensland, 1997) and 'Strange Bedfellows' - Rev. Charles Stewart, *Queensland's First Baptist Minister, and the United Evangelical Church, Brisbane* (Baptist Historical Society of Queensland, 1998) Full documentation will be found in these works. Another version of the Stewart story may be found in *Fortitude: Dr Lang's Vision for Queensland and the United Evangelical Church* by David Parker and Angus Edmonds (BHSQ, 1999)
2. *The Baptists of Yorkshire - Centennial Memorial Volume* (William Byles and Son, Bradford and London Kingsgate 1912) p 283.
3. On Dr John Dunmore Lang and his work, see D.W.A. Baker, *Days of Wrath: a life of John Dunmore Lang* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1985); John Dunmore Lang, *Cookland in north-eastern Australia: the future cotton-field of Great Britain* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1847); Lang, *Narrative of Proceedings in England, Scotland and Ireland during the years 1847, 1848 and 1849 with a view to originate an extensive and continuous immigration of superior character from the United Kingdom into this territory* (Sydney: D.J. Welch, 1850)
4. For the lives of some of these influential people, see Melvin Williams, *Cameos of Baptist Men in 19th Century Queensland* (Brisbane: Baptist Historical Society of Queensland, 1995)
5. The story of the second Baptist minister in Queensland is equally tinged with tragedy and hope. . David Parker, *Thomas and William Deacon: General Baptists in Queensland* (BHSQ, 1998)
6. For the church in Sydney, see Ken R. Manley, *In the Heart of Sydney: Central Baptist Church, 1836-1986* (Sydney: Central Baptist Church, 1987), and Alan C. Prior, *Some Fell on Good Ground* (Sydney: Baptist Union of NSW, 1966)

Heritage Interests at 18th Baptist World Congress Melbourne Jan 5-9 AD 2000

Plans for Heritage involvement at the 18th Baptist World Congress were finalised at the meetings of the BWA Heritage Commission held in Dresden Germany in July 1999 attended by David and Joyce Parker. The Congress provides an opportunity to showcase Australian Baptist heritage and to be enriched by the faith of Baptists from many other countries around the world.

The main feature of the Heritage Commission will be a booth in the Exhibition Area, each afternoon January 6-9. An urgent request is being made to state historical societies and other interested bodies to supply material, ideas, and personal and financial support.

The second major thrust will involve Focus Groups on two afternoons, Thurs and Fri, Jan 6 & 7, with interesting presentations by international and local speakers on the theme, *Baptist Heritage in the New Millennium*. The first day will be devoted to the more general and global aspects of this theme, while the second will be on the Australian scene: *Dinkum Baptist Heritage: Shapers of Australian Baptist Identity*

There will be a Internet Web page associated with the Heritage section operative in the next few weeks with opportunities for contributions on the themes. There will also be interactive computer displays in the exhibition area and demonstrations in the Focus Group sessions.

Congress participants are invited to visit the exhibition booth and also to attend the Focus Group sessions. Historical society members are especially invited to home in on the exhibition booth to meet other likeminded people from around the world and to share experiences.

Greetings: During their trip to the BWA meetings, the Parker's visited and spoke at several churches which responded by sending greetings to Baptists in Queensland. These include South Parade Baptist Church Leeds (from which James Voller left for theological college), Eberswalde Baptist Church, north east of Berlin which was celebrating its 150th Anniversary, and Lichtenberg Baptist Church in East Berlin. Contact was also made with the Archives of the German Baptist Union which should open up avenues of research on current and future projects.

Baptist Ministers in Queensland, 1906-55

Compiled by David Parker

Names of ministers in the officially published lists of the Baptist Union of Queensland from 1907 to 1955. The dates indicate the first and last years in which their names appeared in these lists and not necessarily the years of their pastorates. These figures do not allow for periods within the time frame when ministers were not listed because of absence from the pastorate due to leave, serving in another state or other reason.

** name listed in 1849-1905 lists published in earlier editions of Forum (qv for more detail)

name listed in 1963 BUQ Handbook, the first to carry details of pastoral service (qv)

* name listed in 1999 BUQ Handbook (others may be listed in Interstate books as well)

Abbott, A. Hedley, FRGSA, JP	1923-49	Earl, S. T.	1929-34
Acason, W.	1929-39	Edwards, E., LTh#	1923-55
Albury, A. E.	1916-22	Ehmke, E.**	1909-12
Aldridge, F.	1926-42	Elliott, Howard Leslie **	1906-08
Allan, James	1912-13	English, J. J.	1941-44
Allan, William	1909-11	Euston, B.	1948
Andrews, T. H.#	1946	Evans, E.	1943
Ashworth, Thomas E.**	1906-31	Evans, P. J.#	1925-55
Avery, H.	1939-50	Fallon, Dr. R. H.	1925-26
Back, A. N.	1950	Farquhar, J. C.#	1909-55
Bampton, E.R	1916	Farquhar, R. T.	1939-54
Barnard, Arthur	1917-41	Farrer, Raymond F. J.	1916-17
Barnard, C. V.	1931-48	Ferriday, G.#	1952-55
Barnett, Ezekiel**	1906-23	Fletcher, J. W., LTh	1939-51
Bartlett, J.	1931-38	Forbes, H. E.	1911
Beck, J.	1946-48	Frewin, R. O.#	1921-55
Beeston, R. A. #	1951-55	Gibson, G. N., BD	1936-37
Bell, William, MA	1911-39	Gilbert, C. D.	1941
Bickmore, Arthur E.	1907-14	Glassop, Stephen**	1916
Bird, J. H.#	1941-55	Goodman, P.	1924-41
Bird, L. L., LTh	1947-49	Graham, T. M.	1952-55
Bowring, V. C., LTh#	1946-55	Gray, E. G.	1924-30
*Brady, A.P.#	1952-55	Green, G. A., BA, DipEd	1950-55
Brooks, A. H.	1930-55	Green, J.	1955
Brown, R. W., LTh	1947-55	Griffiths, Wm.	1914-22
Buckley, E.	1948-55	Hare, J. T.	1925
Bugg, Isaac J.**	1916-25	Harris, W. H.	1910
Bulgin, E.G.	1918-28	Harrison, J. Pearson	1944-47
Bunn, H. S.	1919-21	Hartin, W. W.	1952-55
Burns, George**	1906-09	Haughan, G.	1931-54
Burns, R. A.	1954-55	Hawley, A. H., BA	1952-55
Butler, A.	1940-46	Heather, E. F.	1936-41
*Cameron, R.#	1954-55	Heinrich, J.**	1909-35
*Chataway, V. F.#	1950-55	Hewison, B.	1919-34
Chechowich, L. S.	1954-55	Higgs, H. C.	1944-45
Chisholm, A. J. W.#	1923-55	Higlett, William**	1906-09
Cole, James H.**	1906-14	Hill, H. R. G.	1907-29
Cook, J. Wilbur	1955	Hillman, E. E.	1914-23
Crawford, W. E.	1916-19	Hodgson, R. W., BA#	1939-54
Cronau, C.	1920-31	Hogg, James W.**	1906-07
Currell, P. R.	1920-27	Hohnke, B.#	1928-55
Daniells, E.	1920	Hollywood, L. J.	1928-29
Dart, H. W., BA, DD	1925-36	*Holmans, W. K., JP#	1920-55
Dart, S. N.	1928-29	Horn, A. N.	1936
Davidson, A.	1954	Horn, R.	1945
Davies, C. Freeman	1929-37	Horn, Richard	1912-14
*Davis, C. E.#	1954-55	Horswell, S. F.	1948
Davison, E. E.#	1919-55	Howard, A. J. M., LTh#	1938-55
Denning, E. H.	1923-27	Hudson, W. F.	1912-14
Doull, W. G.	1931-38	Hughes, J. G., DTheol	1917
Duffle, C. S.	1947-52	Humphreys., D. W.#	1952-55
*Dunlop, D. A., LTh#	1954-55	Hurst, W. E.	1927-33
Dunshore, G. R.#	1952-55	Jaggers, L. H.	1919-21
Durward, G. W., LTh#	1945-55	Jarrott, R. E., LTh, DipRE#	1946-55
Eagle, W. A.	1914-15	Jarvis, Alfred C.	1910-19

Jarvis, W. L.	1914-21	Plowes, R.	1912-13
Jensen, S. R., LTh#	1943-55	Poole, William**	1906-12
Jenyns, J. Willis	1917-18	Pope, W. G.	1916-26
Johnson, P. A., LTh	1946-55	Potter, S. M., ED	1932-39
Johnston, James	1911-40	Probert, J. T., LTh#	1937-55
Jolly, Archibald	1916	Putland, H. J.	1920-22
Jones, G. Parry	1919-39	Read, R. R.	1943
Kajewski, C. J.#	1925-55	Reekie, W. G.	1921-23
Keith, E. V.#	1920-55	Rice, George Millar**	1906-08
Kerr, Robert	1914-29	Richer, William**	1906-24
Kirkwood, Neville A., LTh#	1948-55	Robertson, Robert**	1906-13
Kirwood, E. A.	1921-53	Rodger, William	1912-13
*Knights, J. H., LTh	1939-53	Rogers, E. J.	1927-35
Krueger, Carl**	1906-26	Rolls, G. C.	1940-45
Krueger, Otto E.**	1906-07	Saunders, H. E.	1908-55
Lamprecht, L.	1954	Sayce, Ralph	1910-55
*Lane, S., LTh#	1946-55	Schmidt, R. G.	1926-30
Lanyon, P. F.	1931-35	Scully, W. J.	1928-32
Latimer, J. H.	1919-37	Seaton, H. T.	1952-55
Lauchlan, R.	1914-15	Shakespeare, L. H.	1938-55
Law, A. W.	1946-49	Shaw, A. D.**	1906-15
Leeder, A. L.	1910-15	Shaw, Wm.	1915-20
Leeder, F. A.	1908-14	Short, E. S.	1911-13
Leggett, J. W., LTh	1944-55	Simpson, H. H.	1922-35
Leitch, J. C., LTh	1948-55	*Skinner, L. F.#	1951-55
Leitch, Thomas**	1906-28	Smith, A. E.	1920-21
Llewellyn, J. C.	1934-44	Smith, F.T.#	1948-55
Longfield, B. H.	1917	Smith, R. F.	1931-40
Luton, C. E.	1922-40	Solomon, W. W.#	1937-55
Malyon, T. J., FSSc**	1906-20	Speis, S. E.	1922
Marks, E. V., LTh	1948-55	Stephens, John B.**	1906-07
Martin, C. E., BA	1928-47	Stone, F. J. C., BA#	1941-55
Masters, Percival J.**	1906-09	Stowards, R.	1920-23
McAdam, G. M.	1940-45	Sullivan, J. F.#	1948-55
McAllister, R. Y.#	1922-55	Symonds, Thos. U.**	1906-36
McCcoll, Thomas	1912-19	Tough, J. T., LTh	1942-53
McIntyre, H. L., LTh#	1944-55	Tranter, L. E.	1916
McKay, W. A., MA	1942-53	Van Cooten, G. T.	1950
McKecknie, G.#	1938-55	Varnes, F. H.#	1936-42
*Mergard, N. W., LTh#	1948-55	Vines, M. L.#	1952-55
Miller, A. E.	1912	*Wakeling, R. T., LTh	1947-55
Miller, C. L.#	1950-55	Walker, J.	1952-55
Moon, C. J. W.	1910-36	Walker, R. G.#	1939-55
Moore, A. L.	1936-45	Walton, John E.**	1906-09
Morgans, G. J.	1938-44	*Ward, J.C.W.#	1954
Moulton, E. S.	1912-18	Ward, T. H., LTh	1934-49
Mursell, A. B.	1913-14	Warren, Charles H. J.**	1906-07
Mursell, James, ATS	1909-14	Warriner, T. C., MA, BD#	1937-55
Newell, S.	1916-50	Waters, W. W.	1942-46
Nicholls, C. H., LTh#	1941-55	*Wedd, R. T.	1952-55
*Niebling, R. M.#	1950-55	Weller, A. G., OBE, ED**	1906-38
Nielsen, H.	1927-40	Weller, J. J.	1914-21
Noble, C. W.	1925-30	*West, H. E. BA, LTh#	1947-55
Norton, A. P.#	1948-52	*Weston, N. E.#	1955
Olcowich, B.	1954-55	Whale, A. T.	1943-45
Orthner, Franz**	1907-10	White, Hilton D.	1939-45
Page, Horace	1914	White, Horace, LTh	1930-55
Page, William**	1906	White, J. E., B.A., LTh#	1929-55
Parish, G.S., LTh	1947-54	Whittle, W. H.	1923-24
Parker, Gray A.#	1918-55	Williams, F. D.#	1951-55
Paterson, D.	1952	Wilson, B. M.	1947-50
Peck, G. W., LTh#	1949-55	Windolf, Herman**	1906-08
Peck, M.E.	1951-55	Wingfield, W. H.	1916-22
Peffer, F. E.	1926-32	*Wolter, P. C.#	1950-55
Pell, F. J.	1923-35	Wright, Harry	1911-13

SEVEN DELIGHTFUL DECADES

An Autobiography by Rev. Norm Weston

Rev. Norm Weston, well known Queensland minister, has recently published an attractive autobiography which marks his seventieth birthday (Christmas Day, 1998). In it he recounts the highlights of his life, family and ministry highlighting some interesting aspects of church and denominational life in the process. Coming to know Christ as boy at a Currumbin camp and being baptised only a few years later, he spent his youth at Greenslopes church. Leaving work in the building industry, he entered the ministry from Sherwood Church in 1953 and has carried out a distinctive ministry at local church and Baptist Union levels, rising to the position of President where he was the first to serve a double term. BHSQ Member and former Secretary, Ellen Chataway provides this review of the book.

Omitting much of the first two decades of the autobiography, we take up his story at the time of his courtship and marriage to Mavis Jones. Entering the Baptist ministry at age 25, Weston realised that the years of working in the building industry were quite unique training. He goes on to say "those extra years serving in the local Church, particularly in areas of leadership, gave me a good insight into how the Church operates, and how people relate there."

Pastoring Tugun, Palm Beach and Coolangatta-Tweed Heads, where they were obliged to live in a condemned cottage, brought to the fore Weston's capacity as builder. People gave liberally, and a new manse was soon erected. But the Pastor still used his bike to travel between preaching points.

These and other frustrations led to Weston submitting his resignation to the Baptist Union and deciding to go back to his trade. Several events followed, leading to re-consideration of this step. Acts 26: 16 sent him to apologise to the Baptist hierarchy and he sought re-acceptance into the Church.

Weston's lack of academic skills was a cause of concern to the Principal of the College and others, but he finished the 5 year course creditably. Ordained at the City Tabernacle, in 1960, during his ministry at Geebung, he next went to Cairns. Serving in this large pastorate, which extended to Atherton Tableland and Innisfail, taxed his physical strength to the limit. Ministering next at the Maryborough Church for five years followed the four at Cairns. Working with the young people was a particular delight, in the commitment they showed. Every age group was involved in some form of choral activity, and orchestras abounded.

Family time was never neglected, whether in reading to his children or kicking a ball in the back yard or park. Holidays were special times, in "togetherness". Ministry at the Silkstone Church, famous for its Welsh miners and their families, came next. Their magnificent singing was ever an inspiration to their Pastor. A two-month stint serving the aboriginal Church at Hooker Creek further enlarged his vision.

As Director of the Department of Youth and Christian Education, Weston describes these five years as "stimulating and interesting". Then he moved to the Salisbury Church, for more than ten years; during this time the Church freed him for a three months overseas study tour to the United States, which was a highlight of this period of ministry. During 1989-91, as President of the Union, he endeavoured to give back something of what had been given to him over the long years of ministry. In retirement, there have been opportunities for interim ministries, at the City Tabernacle and Palm Beach. Christian Tours, of which he has led five to the Holy Land, have further extended his ministry.

This autobiography is easy to read, inspirational and warm, and a great enrichment for its readers.

News and Notes

Deaths: Rev David Voller, great-grandson of Rev James Voller, died in May 1999. He was an Anglican minister who trained at Ridley College and served in Victoria and Queensland. He attended our Voller function and several other Baptist historical activities. His brother Bruce of Sydney who attended our function has also died.

Demolitions: The Nundah Memorial Baptist Church building has been demolished to make way for road works. For some pictures of the demolition see <http://www.sev.com.au/northeastbaptist>. Similarly the last remaining building of the Baptist College at Gray Road West End has been demolished and replaced by apartments. The site and old building was donated by Mr and Mrs E. R. Humphreys in 1939. The first wing of the new brick building was opened on 28 March 1958, with a later phase opened in 1965. The old house was demolished in 1969, and the property sold in 1973 prior to the removal of the college to Brookfield.

Baptist Historical Society of Q: Next meeting – Annual General Meeting 2 pm Sat Nov 6, 1999
