

The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland

(formerly: *Baptist Historical Society of Qld Newsletter*)

No. 50 Dec 2001

FIFTY - 50

Welcome to Issue Number 50 - the first one was dated September 1984 and was published a few months after the formation of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland in May of that year. At first there were about two a year but it soon settled down to three. The name was "BHSQ Newsletter" until 1995 when it changed to "BHSQ Forum".

As the Index printed on pages 7 and 8 of this issue show, there have been a wide variety of articles - including reprints of significant, interesting or informative pages from early publications (mainly the *Queensland Baptist*) and original contributions on topics ranging from family and local church histories through our German Baptist heritage to the world scene. There have been a number of book reviews and biographical columns.

We hope that readers have enjoyed the material even though it has been published in budget xeroxed form. Advances in technology mean it is now easier to use some illustrations but colour, glossy pages and other professional features are much beyond us.

We look forward to a productive future and invite readers to help us. We appreciate your continuing support and interest. You can assist us by encouraging others to take up membership in the Society and also by contributing articles and by alerting us to ideas and material that would be suitable for our pages. There are many aspects of our heritage, both recent and more distant, that are crying out for treatment. We are working towards the sesqui-centenary of Baptist work in Queensland to be celebrated in 2005 and need help to make it a successful milestone.

This journal is meant to be a Forum where people meet. So why not join us in our meetings, presentations, in the Archives and especially in these pages?

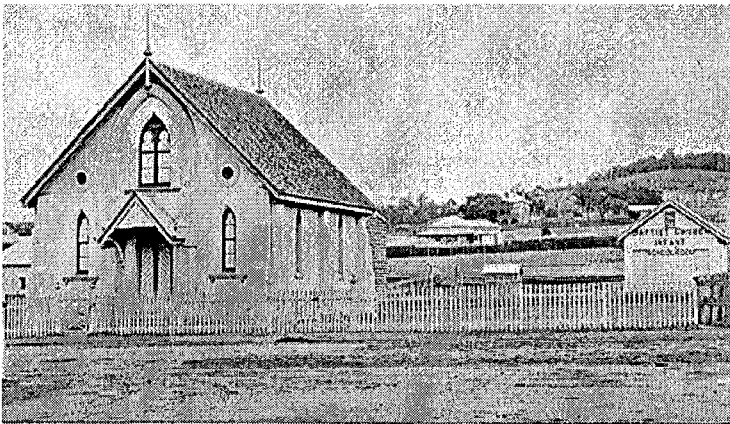
<p>The Baptist Historical Society of Queensland (est. 1984)</p> <p>Membership (2002) Individual \$8 p.a. Family \$12 p.a. Corporate \$20 p.a.</p> <p><i>Qld Baptist Forum</i> 3 issues p.a. Free to Members Others \$2 each posted</p> <p>President: Mr Eric W. Kopittke 98 Yallambee Rd., Jindalee 4074 Phone 3376 4339</p> <p>Secretary: Dr Ken G. Smith, 110 White St, Graceville 4075 Phone 3379 6117</p> <p>www.pacific.net.au/~dparker/forum.html www.pacific.net.au/~dparker/order.html</p> <p>BWA Baptist Heritage & Identity Commission: www.bwa-baptist-heritage.org</p>	<p>CONTENTS</p> <p><i>Qld Baptist Forum no 50 Dec 2001</i></p> <p>Fifty - 50 p 1</p> <p>Early Queensland Baptist Churches</p> <p><i>No 6 Albion</i> p 2</p> <p>Federation p 4</p> <p>Federation & Australian Baptists p 5</p> <p>BHSQ Annual Reports p 6</p> <p>Index to BHSQ <i>Forum</i></p> <p>Nos 1-50(1984-2001) p 7</p>
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Early Baptist Churches in Queensland No 6

ALBION BAPTIST CHURCH (Fire of Hope)

Reproduced from *The Queensland Baptist Dec* 1900 p 165

We continue the reproduction of a series of articles on early Baptist churches in Queensland which appeared in *The Queensland Baptist*. These articles present some interesting details of the churches and buildings. One of the features of the original series was a photograph of the church with each article. Recent pictures of these churches will also be shown where available.



OUR illustration this month is of one of our suburban churches, the offspring of "Jireh" Church, Valley.

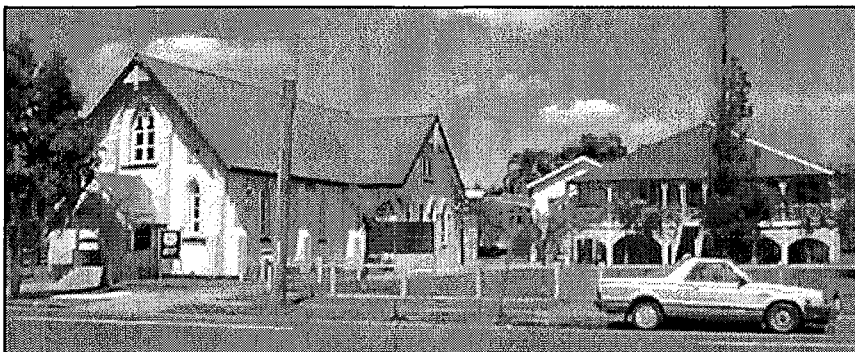
Early in the eighties, Pastor Kingsford commenced prayer meetings in Albion, and in 1882 it was determined to erect a building. A site was purchased midway between the pottery at Albion, and the brickfields of Lutwyche, and where at the time few buildings had been erected. The locality is now thickly settled, many houses having been built at the rear even since the photo was taken.

Plans for the church were drawn by Mr. Richer, who also supervised the erection. The local brick-makers gave the bricks, and on 1st January, 1883, the foundation stone was laid, the opening taking place on 26th June the same year. The design contemplated extension backwards, so that while the front and sides are of brick and cement, the rear is of wood. Its seating capacity is set down as 150. Owing to various causes the cost was heavy, amounting to £504 18s. 3d., including the value of materials and labour given; and to this must be added £60 for the site.

For seven years Albion was worked as a preaching station from "Jireh." In 1890 the present pastor (Rev. William Higlett) was invited to take the oversight, and on 9th November, 1892, a church was constituted by the Rev. J. Kingsford. On the same day the infant schoolroom, rendered necessary by the increase of Sunday scholars, was opened by the president of the Baptist Association.

In 1895, the church platform was enlarged, so that it now accommodates the choir, and two vestries were added. The cost of these, and other minor improvements, has exceeded £100, and all has been raised; but the original debt of £300 on the building was for many years a burden. Last year this was reduced by £130, and a further £40 is expected to be cleared off this month.

The building is too small for the requirements of the church and school, but the outstanding debt must be extinguished before any new departure is made. It is not at all probable that the original design of extension will ever be carried out. In several respects the building is considered unsuitable, and moreover it is below flood level. The flood of 1893 reached the window sills. The owner of the adjacent allotments on the higher sides has kindly promised the church the first option of purchase, and it is therefore likely that in time a new church will be built above flood mark, and the present structure devoted to school purposes. The need for enlargement already exists,



and when the money is forthcoming our friends at Albion will no doubt arise and build.

Note: Not long after the above account was written, the church was enlarged. Turn to page 4 to see the report of that project.

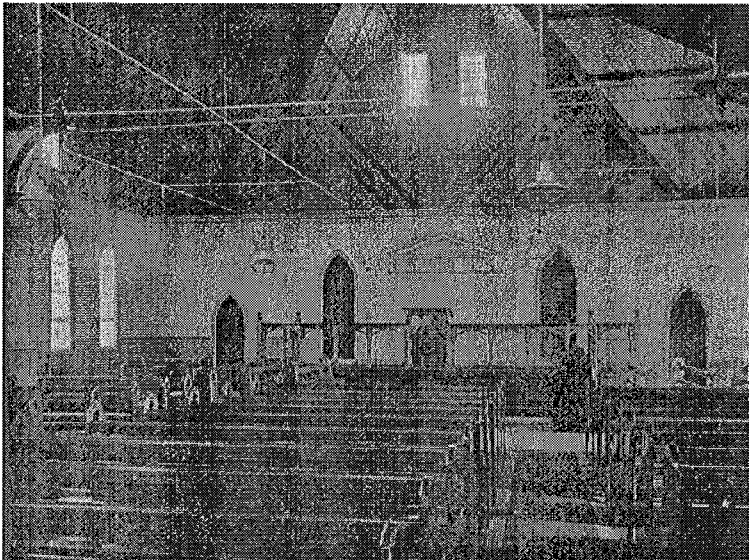
Albion Baptist Church (Fire of Hope) as it is today - with very little outward change from the time covered by the reports in this feature

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Albion Baptist Church (Fire of Hope)

Report on enlargement of church from Queensland Baptist Oct 1902 p. 135.



In September last year the increasing congregations at Albion Church led to the Albion Public Hall being engaged for Sunday evening services. Before Mr. Higlett left for the old country, a sketch for proposed enlargement of the church was prepared by Mr. Mark Taylor, and, during Mr. Higlett's absence, it was decided to proceed with the work, and plans were finally adopted. We are now able to report the reopening, and to present our readers with both exterior and interior views. The following is a description of the alterations and additions.

The old building has been greatly improved, having additional windows and ventilation provided, also a new lobby at the entrance, closed in with green baize

doors, and a very effective and substantial new porch.

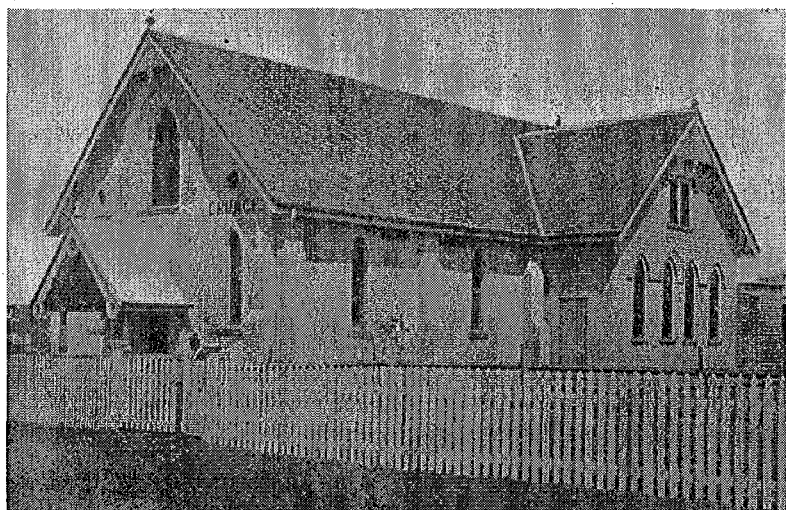
The addition consists of a cross-piece, 46 feet by 23 feet, giving the whole building the form of a letter T. This new portion contains no less than fourteen windows, all of which open, also three gable ventilators and two additional entrance doors. An extensive platform, with a handsome panelled front, and a neatly designed railing and pulpit, with polished cedar top, forms a very effective finish to this part of the interior.

The platform also contains the baptistry, which is finished in white enamel.

The interior walls are painted and finished in a very soft tint, with floral borders, having a very pleasing effect. Immediately behind the platform are two class rooms, 12 feet square, having folding doors between. These rooms are entered from the platform end. Two other class rooms are provided, leading off the floor level of the church. In addition to these extensive alterations, new seats are provided throughout. These are of polished pine, of nice design, with hat hooks under, a desirable improvement. Seating accommodation is provided for 320.

The whole of the work has been faithfully carried out by Mr. R. Gotterson, from designs and under the supervision of the architect, Mr. Mark Taylor. to whom the church is greatly indebted for his services. General satisfaction has been expressed by the members of the church and congregation at the results attained. The cost of the additions and re-seating has been nearly £500 most of which remains as a debt, but the interest is less than the hire of the hall, while the convenience is much greater.

**Albion Baptist Church -
exterior and interior -
after enlargement in 1902**



Federation

To follow up on the articles published in our last issue from the pages of the Queensland Baptist at the time of Federation, we present here some editorial comments on the ceremonies held in Brisbane in January 1901 (QB Feb 1901). In this year of celebration of the centenary of Federation, they make for interesting reading giving insights about the original events themselves but even more so, about Baptist attitudes at the time which seemed very "robust".. There has been little said in Baptist circles a century later with which to compare these remarks!

Commonwealth Celebration: Two lines of thought have taken public attention, and to some extent have become one - the Twentieth Century, and the Commonwealth. New Year's day was the day for proclaiming the Federation of the Colonies, and it will always be difficult to dissociate the two sides. It is not the business of this paper to detail general news, but a few notes will be in place even here.

The Federation of the Colonies is a success but *the celebration was not a success* so far as Brisbane was concerned. There was no popular enthusiasm. Everything indicated red-tape. The triumphal arches were wretchedly poor. The crowds were quiet to a fault. There was little or no music in the procession. General feeling indicated that Sydney was distinguished and Brisbane extinguished. The fireworks even failed to be brilliant. The crowds were not great and those who were there were on holidays anyway and not as Federationists.

Religious Services: The religious, services were competitive, and proved sectarian rather than patriotic. The Anglicans were first before the public, then the Methodists, then the Presbyterians. Any effort for union was not on the basis of equality. There is no sect in citizenship, but officialism here or in Sydney knows only routine and red tape. The Twentieth Century threatens to be characterized not by the struggle for existence, as was the Nineteenth, but by the struggle for equality with some, and for supremacy with others. Fatherhood does not yet secure brotherhood.

The Proclamation: The Governor did his part well. First to religious service, then to public work. The Proclamation was well read in good voice so that people could hear. The few who were with the Governor were of the red-tape order, and citizenship, as such, was not represented. The crowd were citizens, of course. We are thankful that after the Proclamation there was a prayer. The recognition of God is better than Atheism, but so formal the matter, and so silent that the people did not know what was doing, and so no hats were raised, and the people hardly joined.

Swearing-in. The swearing-in of the Governor under the new condition of things should have been a highly important function, but there were few present except such as were paid to be there. We feel very deep sympathy with His Excellency who seemed to do his part with almost lonely dignity. He must have felt that whilst duty called him to make the solemn declarations, the public gave little heed. The public were so little recognised, except as the crowd to be amused, that it took little part. Such as were invited to Sydney were, of course, out of the colony.

Ashamed. Letters which appeared in the papers after January 1st, evidence a general feeling of shame at the inadequacy of the whole thing. As to arches and other attempts there is a feeling of disgust. The lack of order would have been fatal to the procession in a less self-respecting population. No one owns to responsibility under the fire of criticism, and there is an almost hysterical fear lest things should be no better when the soldiers come. The grandees will be back by that time, and will be frantic to be at the front. There must then be more than crumbs from the table of a former festival.

The Federation of Australian Baptists

This article appeared in the Queensland Baptist of May 1884 and gives a good indication of how the moves towards the federation of the Australian colonies created a climate for the closer fellowship of the various Baptist Unions spread across the country. It was to be a long process before the Baptist Union of Australia was finally established in 1926. The concepts its presents need to be reviewed once again as we come to the end of the year of the celebration of the centenary of Federation in a climate of rapidly developing post-denominationalism.

This is an age of conferences, and the tendency everywhere is to federation. Both these facts are interesting and hopeful. In them we may discern the first glimmerings of the 'good time coming'. It is true that many conferences end in very little practical action, but it is not to say that they are, therefore, utterly useless. It may perhaps, be said that the recent conference of the representatives of the various Colonies, held in Sydney, has not produced any visible result. Nevertheless, we believe it was a step in the right direction. Some marriages may be made without any courtship; but this is not the usual course, nor is it the most desirable one in the case of the union of the colonies. We can afford to spend a few years in preliminary converse with each other before the federations comes, if this is to make the tie stronger and more lasting.

Still, we say the sooner it comes the better for all, especially in view of the terrible moral dangers arising from the proximity of the French convict settlements. We heartily endorse the burning words of Mr. Service in reference to the fearful peril we are in as a people, and agree with him "that there is only one difficulty in the way, standing between us and perfect success in dealing with this danger, and that is this:- we have one heart, one soul, one mind in the whole of the Australian Colonies, but we want one head and one hand."

We hope to see a "Federated Australia" before many years - a federation of the whole British Empire may not be very far distant; and then there will only remain to be achieved the grand and promised triumph of truth and righteousness.

"When the drum shall throb no longer, and the battle flags be furled,
In the Parliament of nations, the federation of the world."

Meanwhile a more limited, but still important task is before us as a denomination. It ought not to be such a difficult matter to effect a federation of the Baptist Churches of Australia. A good step has been taken in the formation of the different Associations of the several colonies. A better feeling, too, now exists in the Churches in regard to general denominational interests throughout Australia. A few years ago, for example, the Churches in Victoria knew little and cared less about the Baptist interest in Queensland, and *vice versa* but now there is at any rate, a measure of sympathy between the two. We sincerely hope that the Intercolonial Conference to be held in Sydney in September next will result in some definite action. We are glad that Queensland has decided to send a representative. There are many important matters which might well be taken up by the colonies in unison.

The foundation of a United Baptist College for the colonies would supply a great need. A first-class institution might be maintained by the churches of the whole of Australia, in which suitable men for colonial work might be trained in a suitable way. Then, again, a strong denominational paper for the whole of the colonies would be a great boon, and the examination of ministerial credentials (as in America) by some duly authorised body would save the churches many a disaster. The mere fact of such a union would give strength and courage to all its component parts. The days of miserable isolation are indeed past, but much yet remains to be done before our united force is felt as it should be. Believing that we have truth on our side, that our motives are pure, and that our principles are adapted for the most progressive community, we have only to consolidate our forces in order to achieve a grand and permanent victory; but it holds good with us, as with all organizations, that:—

'UNITED WE CONQUER, BUT DIVIDED WE FALL'

Baptist Historical Society of Queensland

17th Annual General Meeting, 3 November 2001

Secretary's Report

The year 2001 has seen continued interest in our history by people in Baptist churches throughout Queensland. Membership of the Society has increased slightly, and we look forward to further interest, as more and more people realize the importance of discovering and remembering our Baptist heritage. There is, however, a need to inspire more of our young people to take an interest in our historical roots, as one way of minimizing the pressure to follow the latest fads in church life and worship. It is too early to say whether the adoption (at the recent Annual Assembly) of a statement about the "core values" held by our churches will lead to further interest the historical background of our denomination.

Officers elected at the Annual meeting in November, 1999 were: President: Mr Eric Kopittke; Secretary, Dr Ken Smith; Treasurer: Rev. Vince Chataway.

There has been continued demand for our publications throughout the year. The revised version of "Baptists in Queensland: A Guide to their Life and Faith", launched at the Annual Convention in 2000, continues to be one of the most popular, though sales have slackened off from the high point immediately following the launch.

This year has been a rather quiet one, compared with the large celebrations of 2000 with the publishing of three major books. Plans are being made for some form of major celebration of the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the first Baptist Church in Queensland, though it should not be forgotten that this took place a few years before Queensland became a separate State. These celebrations, in 2005, are being planned in conjunction with the City Tabernacle and the Baptist Union.

We are very grateful for the help provided by the Baptist Union office in the preparation of our display for the Annual Convention. Special mention should be made of Nigel Patterson, for his work in assisting with preparation of material for the display.

The list of our publications now totals 19. There are still many areas in which a consolidated work would be helpful, and it is hoped that as we approach the 150th anniversary of the opening of the first Baptist church in Queensland, more people will be encouraged to look to our heritage and unearth the many treasures which have, in some cases, passed from living memory. We need to continue to impress on people the importance of making accurate records of events, so that in the future people will be able to look back and be encouraged by our successes, as well as giving thought to reasons for any lack of success.

As we move forward into a new year, we look forward to continuing the work of recording and analysing our history, so that, aware of what has gone on in the past, we may take note of our errors, and preserve and remember the good things, to the glory of our Lord.

Ken Smith, Secretary

At the annual meeting, the existing officers were reelected to another term and the rate of subscriptions was kept the same (see front cover) All members and subscribers are reminded that subscriptions for the year 2002 are now due. The Society wishes to thank those who have supported it over the year and looks forward to continued and increased support.

The financial report presented by treasurer, Rev Vince Chataway, showed a satisfactory result in both the publication and general funds.

The Archivist, Dr David Parker, indicated that activity has continued at a moderate level this year, with a steady run of enquiries and some valuable acquisitions. More storage facilities are needed for certain classes of material and there is work to be done on bringing some parts of the collection into a more adequate state.

A proposal has been received from the Baptist Historical Society in Victoria about a national biographical register of Baptists.

Plans are under discussion for the 2002 Heritage Feature focusing on historic Jireh Church at Centenary Jireh. Further preparation was also made at the recent meeting for the 150th anniversary in 2005.

Dates set for meetings of the Society in 2002 are 2 March, 1 June and 2 Nov (AGM)

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