

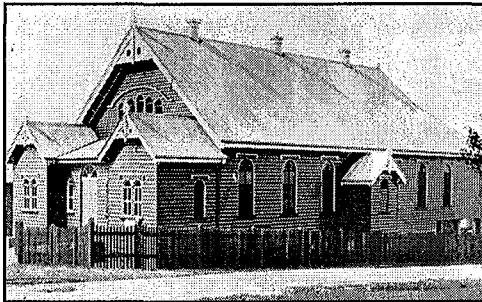
The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland

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No. 54 Apr 2003

Church re-locates (back) at Nundah

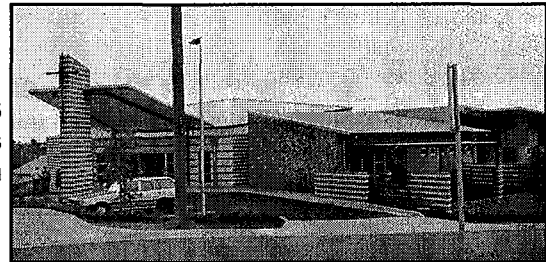


Some time ago, the members of Nundah Baptist Church were advised that their building (corner of Bage and Chapel Streets) which was erected in 1923 as the Queensland Baptist War Memorial church was to be resumed as part of extensive road works in the area to provide a by-pass around the local business district in the form of tunnel. The church was able to negotiate an arrangement for their subsequent relocation back to the same place after the road works were completed. (The original church, formerly the Fortesque Street Baptist Church, Spring Hill, erected 1876, was opened next door along Chapel Street in June 1889)



The old church was demolished in 1998. In the meantime, the church began worshipping with its former daughter church, Wavell Heights. It was constituted 4 Sept 1960 but work began 8 May 1949. Then the two churches merged to form a new fellowship, North-East Baptist Church. When construction of the new church at Nundah was well under way, the Wavell Heights building (opened 7 Aug 1955 on cnr Pfnigst Road and Brae Street) was sold.

The new church (right) was opened 2 Feb 2003 and dedicated a week later. Now the fellowship has the opportunity to re-establish its ministry in a modern facility as a new church on its old site.



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of Queensland**
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Early Baptist Churches in Queensland No 9

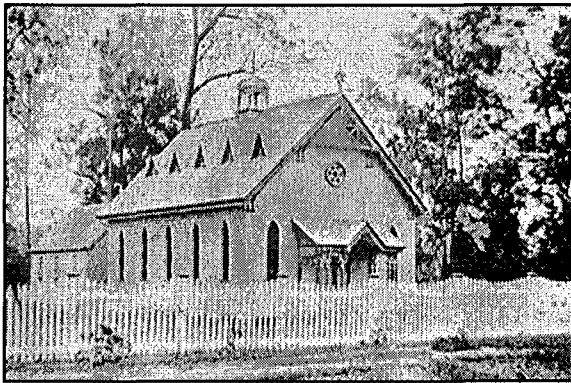
ENOGERA BAPTIST CHURCH

Reproduced from *The Queensland Baptist* May 1901 P 63

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 a view of the pretty building on the Samford Road, occupied by the Baptist Church which has just been formed there. It is a commodious structure, capable of seating nearly 200 people, and was erected at a cost of £500—of which £150 still remains as a debt. It was erected in 1890, and took the place of the original building, which was not large enough for the congregation, and which was renovated and removed to the rear for use as a Sunday school.

The history of the work at Samford Road is not without interest, as the following brief sketch will show. Some thirty years ago the Rev. James Voller, of Sydney, came to reside in the district; and it was felt by him and



The 1890 Enoggera building with the original 1872 structure at the rear

other Baptist friends that a place of worship was sorely needed, especially in view of the number of children who were debarred by distance from attendance at a Sunday school. The result was that in the year 1872, a building was erected at a cost of about £80, and opened in the month of October, as a mission station connected with the Wharf Street Church in Brisbane. The land was given by the late Mr. R. G. Petty. The services were conducted for some time by brethren from the present church, and a good Sunday school was organised—Misses Voller and Lade, Messrs. T. and J. Lade, with others, being the teachers.

In the year 1875, the late Mr. W. Bell and family went to reside in the district, followed by Messrs. R. B. and J. B. Hall, and subsequently by the late Mr. Warry and family. These friends proved a valuable accession to the

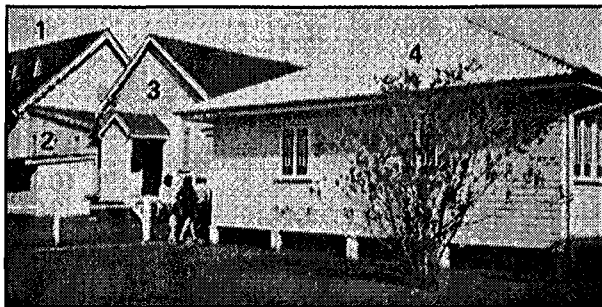
cause; and for many years the work was practically carried on by Messrs. Bell and Hall. The population did not increase so rapidly as expected—the promised railway not being constructed until recently. Still the congregation held together, and the increase in their number led to the erection of the present building in 1890.

In September, 1896, the Rev. W. Page arrived from New South Wales to take charge of the services—sharing his time with the Taringa mission. This arrangement proved very satisfactory, and was continued until within the last few months. After an interval, during which the services were supplied by various friends, the Rev. W. Ottaway was engaged for six months, and is now labouring in the district.

With the railway as an accomplished fact, and the extension of the tramway service in the near future, there is good reason to expect a considerable addition to the population, and the church should have a bright prospect of usefulness before them.

The pioneers of the movement are nearly all gone to the better land: but God remains. He is faithful who has promised; and our desire is that the younger members of the old families of the district may be long spared to carry on the good work in Enoggera, and to leave fragrant memories of blessing behind them.

H. G. CRAY.



Enoggera Church buildings 1972

Left: A 1972 picture with the 1890 building at far left (1—now demolished) and the original 1872 building (2) next to it. In 1924, a building which had been used for services at Everton Park, was badly damaged in a storm and was moved to Enoggera as the hall (3). The church was renovated in 1953 with improved windows and a new porch. A large new hall was opened in 1959, and extensions were made to it in 1969. Finally in 1977 the present modern church (not pictured) facing Hawthorne St was erected.

Samuel Lane

The Formative Years of his Life and Ministry

Part 2: His pioneer ministry at Glen Innes

Adapted from an essay by John Lane

(continued from No 51 April 2002)

A Raging Controversy

Let us visit the Armidale Baptist Church, where a meeting of church members was held on March 29, 1930. The minutes of this meeting state:



Rev Samuel Lane

Mr Morse reported that he had been in communication with several people in Glen Innes and district who urged the church to open a Baptist cause as soon as possible. The Report was adopted on the motion of Mrs. Lane, seconded Mr. J. Cameron. Carried.

The mover of this motion was without doubt Samuel's mother. She, of course, would not know that her son would become Pastor at Glen Innes at the end of the following year. The Baptists at Glen Innes formed themselves into a Church during November 1930, as the result of a very successful tent mission conducted for some weeks from October by Evangelist John G. Ridley. There were some sixty conversions registered during this mission. John Owen, a keen young Christian, who in 1945 became the minister of the Armidale Church, assisted Mr. Ridley. Alan Prior, formerly of Griffith, who by this time had entered the ministry and was Assistant Pastor at Armidale, was released from the work at Black Mountain for one month to support the mission. He also visited the area regularly to visit the people and give encouragement.

It would appear that Glen Innes was greatly in need of a truly evangelistic witness. Mrs Catherine Jane Madgwick, a truly godly woman, had been praying for some time for the Lord to send an evangelist to the area to preach Christ in His fullness, and that people would be born again. Her prayers were bountifully answered in the coming of John Ridley for the mission. But the clouds of controversy were gathering. According to the jubilee history of the church,

The ministers of the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches conjointly made an announcement from their pulpits urging members of their congregation not to have anything to do with these Baptists who were coming into our midst. They regarded the Baptists as some new cult, hair splitters of religion, and their coming into our midst will not benefit the community. 'By all means' they declared 'Go and hear Mr. Ridley whom we believe is a man of God, but don't think of linking up with them.'...The Salvation Army however was most receptive to the Baptist cause being established.

What blessing these ministers could have experienced in their churches had they adopted a spirit of co-operation, like the Galilean fisherman who called to their partners to bring their boat to hold the great shoal of fish, so that both boats were filled to overflowing (Luke 5:7). The Rev. D.G. Morse of Armidale conducted the first baptisms in Furracabad Creek "in the presence of a gathering estimated to be at least 200. No doubt, many of those in attendance were there out of curiosity to witness this 'new' method of



Black Mountain Baptist Church, near Guyra

converted and baptised by immersion as a believer in a personal Saviour. Not so many years ago he passed into the Presence of the Lord and prior to his passing spent a number of years in one of our Baptist Homes.

Church Building and Marriage

Notwithstanding all of this controversy, "blessings continued to abound and the Church progressed wonderfully." On October 20 1931, tenders had been presented to a meeting of church members for the erection of a church building on land that had been acquired on April 14 of that year. Finally, a tender presented by Mr. T. Bacon, the Church Secretary, was accepted on June 30 1932, and the preparations of the site proceeded immediately. A photograph from this period shows Samuel assisting in this work, following a horse-drawn plough across the property. The building was quickly erected, and was opened for the worship of God and to His glory on 18 August 1932, by Mrs J.G. Ridley.

At this point we must return to the relationship Samuel had commenced with Freda Varnes. Did this friendship prosper? It most certainly did, in spite of the distance from Glen Innes to Crows Nest in Sydney, where Freda lived. On September 29 1932 the first church members' meeting to be conducted in the new building was held, at which it was decided that the Pastor "be granted 1 month's leave as his presence was required in Sydney to fulfil a very important engagement." So it was that Samuel journeyed to the North Sydney (now Northside) Baptist Church in Crows Nest, where he and Freda were married on November 5 1932, by Dr. Ernest Lodge Watson, the Minister of the Church. The Certificate of Marriage includes the signature of Principal G.H. Morling as the Assistant Minister for the occasion.

Their first child Eva Louise arrived during a second mission conducted at Glen Innes by Evangelist John G. Ridley. The Church had "felt the time was ripe for another such effort," and the mission was planned for November. Samuel and Freda rejoiced, not only at the birth of their daughter, but also at the new birth of many into the kingdom of God. He would tell in later days of times of protracted prayer spent by himself and the evangelist on a slight rise overlooking the town, and how a great blessing descended. On a visit made to a home, the lady occupant patiently waited for Samuel to finish speaking about the weather and other trivialities. At last he ventured to speak about spiritual realities, to which she replied, "I wanted you to raise these matters. How may I become a Christian?" He had the joy of leading her to Christ.

In March 1934, Samuel resigned from this pastorate, accepting a call to the Lismore Baptist Church. In accepting his resignation, the Church placed on record its appreciation "for the faithful and untiring work of Mr. Lane whose object always was the furtherance of God's Kingdom."

Conclusion

These were indeed formative years (1922-1934). The impact upon them by the prayers of Samuel's grandfather in England cannot be ignored. Henry Lane, the father of Samuel's mother Elizabeth (John and Elizabeth were first cousins), wrote:

Our eldest daughter has lately gone from us with her husband and six children to Australia. Although so far away, they have the same God to go to there; and to Him I would commit them...; praying they may be a seed to serve Him, and a generation to call the Redeemer blessed....

How significantly Henry's prayers have been answered! Samuel was the first of Henry's offspring to enter the full time ministry. Others have followed. On leaving New South Wales for Queensland in 1946 after ministries at Punchbowl (1936-41) and Wellington (1942-6), Samuel served other notable churches. These included Silkstone (1946-52) in the Ipswich area; Nundah (1952-63) in suburban Brisbane, Gattin/Tent Hill (1963-65), and Bundaberg (1965-69) and, in his senior years, assisting the Rev. Neville Abrahams at the Brisbane City Tabernacle (1969-73).

Many today rise and call him blessed, in gratitude to Almighty God. May others, in years yet to come, follow Samuel Lane's example in devotion to the Saviour he loved, in faithfulness to the Gospel he preached, and in service to the saints he nurtured. The fragrance of his memory will linger for years to come.

Note: The original complete version of this paper won the Baptist Historical Society of NSW essay prize recently. The author, the son of Rev. Samuel Lane, is continuing to research and write the remainder of his father's life story.



Oral History Session with Retired Ministers and Wives

On Monday Feb 24, about 35 retired ministers and their wives gave a great boost to the BHSQ's new 150th anniversary history project using the technique of oral history to tap the wealth of information they possess about the last 50 or more years of Baptist life in Queensland and beyond. They kindly opened their regular fellowship meeting to the BHSQ and contributed enthusiastically during the one hour session. The group was divided into three sections, led by Rev. Ken Steer, Mr Royce Perkins and Dr David Parker. The focus of their discussion was on five topics arranged under the acronym, S.P.I.R.M. - spirituality, people, ideas, reading and motivation. These topics had had been circulated to the participants earlier so the discussion was lively and detailed. Information gained from the session will be valuable as work begins on the planned new history of Baptists in Queensland which the Society is hoping to publish at the time of the 150th anniversary of Baptist work in the state in 2005 (see page 8).

Oral history is valuable because it taps into the living memories of people involved in the events and is able locate trends and feelings in a way that written documentary history often cannot. In fact, the written history of Queensland Baptists for the period is not strong, detailed or comprehensive so oral history is a valuable supplement which can indicate overall directions and high or low points in the life of a group. Usually, oral history is conducted on an individual basis, which is a time consuming process. However, a meeting of many ministers and wives was too valuable an opportunity to miss. Furthermore, the dynamics of a group and of couples meant that memories were stimulated and refreshed in a particularly valuable way. Particular points that come up which are too detailed for group discussion can easily be followed up later individually.

The pastoral experience of members of the group extended back as far as 1950 or even earlier, a period of extraordinary change and development in the life of the denomination. One group had a great deal to contribute about even earlier days, wanting to share experiences and memories of church life during World War 2. Interest focused particularly upon the large church services, the robust evangelistic preaching and the care and concern shown to service men and women by the churches in the form of meals, accommodation and fellowship. The enthusiastic involvement of US service personnel who attended Baptist churches in Queensland was significant for its enlivening impact on the people. War service itself was of interest in the way in which it provided valuable experience and stimulated the personal and spiritual growth of people. It was not surprising that after the war this led in many cases to involvement in full time Christian service, and a strong boost to many forms of Christian evangelistic and missionary interest.

When discussing the spirituality of the day, some of the members remembered a strict, even legalistic emphasis on various activities, serious attention paid to the responsibilities of church membership and prayer-sessions dominated for 'leading men' which sometimes left people feeling inadequate. Christian Endeavour was a valuable medium for training young people and introducing them to Christian witness and service. Church services were marked by a sense of reverence for God, and a worshipful attitude engendered by hymns. Evangelistic preaching was often effective and influential in the local community.

Some of the most prominent people mentioned included denominational leaders like Rev Ralph Sayce (faithful but dour), Rev Vic. Bowring (welcoming sympathetic father figure with interest in the pastor's families), Principal T.C. Warriner (a honest scholar even though his socks often did not match!), Rev. A.H. Brooks (with his enthusiastic motivation but strict rules), and Rev. Dick Walker (total sincerity in his own Christian walk, and with evangelistic gifts. There were laymen like Roy Lockhart and Cecil Sweetman, and also Mrs Ernest Edwards, as well as 'unspectacular genuine men of God' who faithfully served in country places. As well as these prominent people, there were Christian parents, Sunday school teachers and lay leaders in the church, some of whom served as deacons and officers over many years, although sometimes these lengthy periods had their own difficulties!

Time ran out on Feb 24 before the memories and enthusiasm! However, the points mentioned were all of interest and value and have been recorded so they can become part of the overall pool of information for the new history of the Baptists in Queensland. Thanks is expressed to all those who so willingly took part in an interesting session.

Help Needed with Major Project

150th anniversary of Baptist work in Queensland

The Baptist Historical Society of Queensland (BHSQ) is seeking help for its next big project, compiling a new history of the Baptists in Queensland for the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the first church. The last history, written by the late Rev John White, was published 25 years ago. The only other history was prepared for the Jubilee in 1905.

Mr White's 250 page hard-cover book, *A Fellowship of Service*, told the story of the founding of the earliest churches and the growth of denomination. However, it is in urgent need of updating and expansion to cover the time since it was published and to incorporate the result of additional research about the foundations. It is also hoped to expand the book to cover more topics than previously, including the Aboriginal, German, Chinese and similar groups of Baptists, the wide range of innovative ministries and activities that have taken place over the years, and the life of Baptists in the many different parts of the state.

The Society is anxious to hear from people who are interested in assisting in the preparation of the new book. Help is needed with researching information, compiling statistics, gathering documents and photos, writing the text and designing the book. In particular, the Society is looking for ways to fund the project so that an attractive book and supplementary materials may be produced. The BHSQ is specially interested in collecting previously unknown documents and especially in filling the twenty year gap in the available copies of *The Queensland Baptist* which exists from 1930-1950.

The first Baptist church in Queensland, now known as the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, was inaugurated in August 1855 by people who had been members of the earlier United Evangelical Church, led for six years by Baptist minister Rev. Charles Stewart. A full program of celebrations are being planned for 2005 by the City Tabernacle to mark its sesquicentenary. It is hoped that the new book on the story of Baptists in Queensland will be available in time for the main focus of the celebrations in August 2005. There is also consideration being given to pictorial and graphic displays of the life of contemporary churches at forthcoming Queensland Baptist Conventions.

Any people or churches interested in supporting the venture or seeking further information are invited to contact Dr David Parker on 07-3878 3178 or email dparker@pacific.net.au.

