



# Baptist Historical Society of Queensland Newsletter

No 7 April 1987  
Free to members

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

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## B. H. S. Q. ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING

### BAPTIST BUILDINGS FOR SERVICE AND WORSHIP

MONDAY JUNE 1 AT 7.45PM

Salisbury Baptist Church, Lillian Avenue

With the erection of new church buildings continuously taking place and the destruction of the former Jireh Baptist Church recently, the importance of buildings for witness, worship and service cannot be forgotten. The next public function of the BHSQ will be held on the above date to highlight some of the important features of Baptist buildings in Queensland.

The meeting will feature Mr Ray Smith who has been involved with Baptist church design and building over many years and Mr Graham Hobbs who has recently completed a major project on all of Queensland Baptist churches in conjunction with his architectural studies. He has analysed a large amount of information and collected photographic records of the buildings erected and used by Baptists over the years. He will present a fascinating account of Baptist buildings and features about them that influence our witness and worship by referring to some of the most significant ones. The President of the Society, Dr David Parker, will also present a short illustrated address on church buildings throughout history.

Please make this function as widely known as possible, especially amongst pastors, deacons, building committee members and those responsible for planning and using church buildings. Plan to come and bring with you any material relating to church buildings that might be suitable for a display (eg photos, plans, models, printed matter etc).

**BRING A PLATE FOR SUPPER WHICH WILL BE SERVED AT THE CONCLUSION  
OF THE GATHERING**

## JIREH CHURCH

On Friday February 6th, 1987, the end came for the former Jireh Particular Baptist Church building in Gipps Street. It was gutted by fire and by the next afternoon, had been demolished. By the end of the weekend, the site was cleared!

The church was a sorry sight when inspected early Saturday morning. The roof had been damaged and there was evidence of fire billowing from the windows. Inside, the contents and walls and fittings were a mass of charred wreckage. Yet the adjacent hall was untouched. Similarly, an amazing amount and variety of junk in the yard ranging from a barbeque plate and Chinese food containers to video equipment was virtually unharmed.

There was little hope for the building, so by the afternoon, a giant back-hoe had climbed up the high walls and was busy breaking down the 125 year old structure. Soon it was a pile of rubble, waiting for the lorries to move up alongside and carry it all away.

The property had recently been sold (again) and it would appear that the site, along with adjoining ones will be re-developed. Police have reportedly ruled out any suspicious circumstances.

The Jireh Church was erected in 1862 as the chapel for the newly formed fellowship which had broken away from Wharf Street Church (now City Tabernacle). The fellowship was named Jireh Particular Baptist Church and the building had this name inscribed high up on the front in the form "Jehovah Jireh." The opening took place on Wednesday, December 10, 1862 (anniversary of the separation of Queensland from New South Wales). It was described then as

"about sixty-two feet long by about thirty feet wide, of brick on a stone foundation, with a shingled roof; the fittings internally are of pine, with the exception of the seats, which are cedar. It is a very neat and substantial structure, and reflects great credit on the contractor, Mr T. Price (a member of the church)."

The building was designed by a well-known local architect, Benjamin Backhouse in Gothic Revival style, and cost 2000 pounds. The opening ceremony was conducted by a Particular Baptist pastor from Sydney, Rev. John Bunyan M'Cure and also included the induction of Rev. John Kingsford as pastor. A large crowd, including ministers and members of a number of other Brisbane churches of all denominations attended.

The church was located in a new and growing area of the town and had a long and fruitful ministry. The hall was erected in 1866 and various modifications and renovations were carried out later, but the fellowship used the same buildings and site until it was disbanded in 1978 due to lack of numbers brought about mainly by extensive developments and changes of land use in the area. The building was listed by the National Trust in 1970. Proceeds from the sale of the building were devoted to a new church in the suburb of Centenary which perpetuates the name of the old church in its title.

For more details, see Dr D. Parker's article on the church in *The Baptist Quarterly*, Vol XXXI No 4, October 1985, pages 159-178.

## PROJECTS

Now that we have a full listing of Baptist church buildings on file, two projects are currently underway which should help to provide more useful information for researchers. Assistance with either or both is most welcome.

The first is an attempt to catalogue and identify photographs held in the Baptist archives. There are quite a number which are clearly marked, but others are quite mysterious. No doubt someone might know so they will be displayed from time to time in an attempt to find more details. A good catalogue system (including computerization) is being developed to provide easy access to information about photos on hand.

The second project is still in its infancy, or really is in its pre-natal stage. It is an attempt to gather basic information about pastors of Baptist churches, commencing with the earliest. This will then be catalogued (again with the aid of computerization) so that it is accessible to researchers. Details sought will be dates of birth, marriage, death and ordination, place and nature of training, periods and locations of ministry, family details, and any other relevant material. It will not always be possible to obtain these details, but whatever is available will be recorded in the hope that it is of some use and that other details may become available at a later date.

Sources of information and help with the recording of it is needed if these projects are to be successful.

## TOPP FAMILY CENTENARY

One of the BHSQ's most active members, Mr Dick Scanlan of Laidley reports that he has been working on arrangements for a centenary celebration for the Topp Family to be held at Boonah in August, 1987. An outline of the steps taken to prepare this centenary produced by Dick may be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

One by-product of the preparation of this centenary has been the decision to clean up the old Baptist cemetery at Kalbar so that it will be more presentable for the occasion. The clean up will take the form of a working bee on location on Saturday June 13, 1987. Helpers will be welcome.

## TREASURES IN YOUR ARCHIVES?

Do you perhaps have some treasures in your own archives or else tucked away in your church somewhere? May be there are many, but we are after just one treasure this time. What is it? you ask! The answer: copies of the Queensland Baptist! The Baptist Union Archives is short of many earlier copies of the "QB" and we wonder whether anyone can help. We need copies prior to Jan 1951. So if you have any at all that you no longer need, then contact the president with details.

## SOCIETY NEWS

### FINANCES

1985-6

Balance as at 6 November 1985		7.91
Income:		
Subscriptions	117.00	
Sale of papers and tapes	403.40	
Bank Interest	1.91	
		522.31
Total		530.22
Expenditure:		
Baptist Union	30.00	
Newsletter expenses printing etc	168.92	
G. Roberts expenses & hon.	75.00	
Change reimbursement	50.00	
Tapes	28.00	
BAD tax	.90	
		352.82
Balance as at 7 November 1987		177.40

### B.H.S.Q. ANNUAL MEETING

1986

The annual meeting of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland was held at the Baptist Union archives on Saturday November 8, 1986, as announced in the October 1986 Newsletter. The financial statement, reproduced elsewhere in this issue, was presented. The secretary reported that membership was still only about a dozen. The president spoke about general activities, as outlined in a report printed on page 3 of the October newsletter.

There was considerable discussion about the future operations of the Society, especially taking into account responses that had been received from some members and the continuing need and opportunities for such a society. The success of the celebration of German work at Laidley through the year was a great encouragement. It was agreed that the shortage of numbers meant it was difficult to carry out all the activities that were desirable. However, it was decided that it would be kept in operation during 1987 with a more limited programme of events, consisting of one public meeting each year, representation at the Assembly, the newsletter being issued a few times each year as opportunities permitted, and gatherings of interested members at the archives (or elsewhere) periodically for discussion and activity.

The existing officers were re-elected on this basis, and thanks was expressed to all who had shown their interest in the society throughout the year. The Baptist Union was included in this appreciation for office and other assistance. Members were invited to take opportunity to commend the society wherever they could.

## NEW SOUTH WALES BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

The Baptist Historical Society of New South Wales continues to set a good lead in its activities. It has recently published its fourth book. It is called "Baptists in the Cradle City" and is the story of the Parramatta Church from 1838 to 1986. A notice in the Society journal, *The Recorder* for April 1987 states that the 176 page book

"covers much more than the annals of the Parramatta Church. It gives profiles, where they are available, of many of the pioneers of the cause, and interesting outlines of the careers of the pastors who have served. Also, because the church ventured out into its district, there are sidelights on the commencement of Baptist causes at Granville, Auburn, Merrylands, Rooty Hill, Dundas, Eastwood, Ermington and Maroota, as well as attempts to open up work at Guildford, Blacktown, Westmead and Winston Hills. Readers will gain an insight into many aspects of the efforts of committed Baptists to established the denomination in a large area of western Sydney.

The book costs \$10, plus \$1.50 postage, and may be obtained from the secretary, at 120 Herring St, Eastwood, 2122.

A range of speakers have presented a series of interesting papers at bi-monthly meetings. At the February meeting, Mr Ron Cardwell presented a paper on Rev Allan Webb, "A man of vision." He was the first secretary and also the first president of the Baptist Union of New South Wales as well as being pastor of the largest church at the time, Harris Street and a stalwart for Home and Foreign Missions. He served in Auckland and later in South Australia and Victoria where he was also president of those two unions.

Rev G.B. Ball spoke to the April meeting on aspects of the ABMS work in Bengal, while the June and August meetings are to be devoted to the work at Marrickville and missionary Flo Harris.

The Society's annual meeting is set for April 9 when, amongst other business, will be the election of a new chairman to replace Dr Ken Manley, founding president, who recently left New South Wales to take up his appointment as Principal of Whitley College, Melbourne. His expert leadership has meant a great deal to the society.

### ESSAY COMPETITION

The N.S.W. Society is again sponsoring an essay competition on any aspect of Australian Baptist History. The essay is to be between 5000 and 7000 words and must show evidence of thorough research with documentation and a bibliography. Entries close on September 30 and the first prize is \$150.

## REV. WILLIAM WHALE: AN ENGLISH PREPARATION

by Patrick O'Leary

As I sit at my computer writing this article, I think of all the work I have just completed to hand in the first draft of the first chapter of my BA (Hons.) thesis. There is no doubt in my mind that Rev. William Whale is a very important historical figure in the development of Queensland Baptist thought and action.

Many who are reading this article might be thinking, "Rev. William Whale! Who is he?" I can sympathize with your question, for until a few months ago that was my response also. Let me tell you a little about the man who was pastor of the City Tabernacle Baptist Church 1885-1903 and the one to whom I am devoting a year of my life researching his biography!

William Whale was born in Redditch, England, in 1842 to a poor farming family. After only two years of schooling he, at the tender age of six and half, began his working life. In 1852 his family moved, like so many other poor rural people in that area, to the burgeoning industrial city of Birmingham. It was there, in that dirty, disease ridden and morally decaying city that the young, impressionable William first began to show the promise of things to come. He was trained as both a brass finisher and saddle and harness maker. However, it was the in the areas of Sunday School, Band of Hope, and Mutual Improvement Classes that he really shone.

Under the watchful eye of Rev. Charles Vince, reputed to be the "best-loved, perhaps, of all the Birmingham ministers of his time," Whale began to prepare himself for the work of preaching the gospel. He gave much time to supplying at the mission stations, particularly at Tamworth, and open air preaching. It was, however, on the political platform that he gained his reputation. In 1865, with the help of Rev. Vince, he was accepted into Spurgoen's College, London.

After completing the college course, in 1866 Whale went to Bures St. Mary, Suffolk. From there the Stoke-green Baptist Church in Ipswich, Suffolk, called him in 1870. He distinguished himself as both a pastor, preacher, public and political speaker, and newspaper editor. In 1877, the New-port Rd. Baptist Church in Middlesborough, Yorkshire, called him to head up the pastoral and preaching ministry in the city. Although he had developed quite a reputation as a "political parson" in Suffolk, it was in Middlesborough that he really left his mark. It was not uncommon for famous visiting speakers to hear the Yorkshire crowds begin the chant, "Whale, Whale" during a political meeting, such was the reputation of the Baptist minister. In spite of his public ministry, his church grew from 280 in 1880 to 330 in 1883, or from the 13th largest Baptist church in Yorkshire to the 9th largest.

In 1885, with the retirement of Rev. H. Coombs, the Wharf St. Baptist Church in Brisbane asked Dr. Landels of Edinburgh to arrange a suitable minister to accept the vacant pastorate. Landels had no hesitation in approaching Whale, who duly accepted and headed for the colonies. Upon arrival, Whale wasted little time in establishing himself as an influential "political parson."

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## HOW TO ORGANIZE A FAMILY CENTENARY

by Dick Scanlan

"a broad outline of the way we approached and finally arranged the Topp Family celebration."

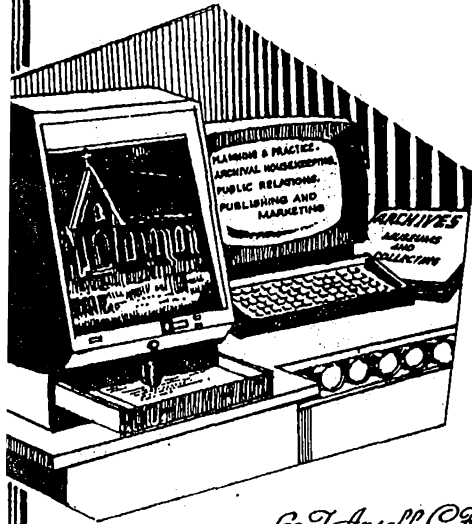
1. Find a small number of people who are keen to hold the centenary, and select a time and place.
2. Place letters in the press to announce the details of the centenary.
3. Find a reliable person from each branch of the family who will accept responsibility. This is a key to success.
4. Invite these family representatives to a planning meeting. Other interested relatives should be encouraged to come also. Do not exclude anyone at all who is interested.
5. Print a publicity leaflet listing the broad objectives. Organize souvenirs and start taking orders and money before they are on hand. This will provide necessary funds.
6. Family representatives are mainly responsible for selling souvenirs and providing information for the booklet.
7. Appoint an executive committee to compile a booklet, and to give attention to incidental matters that arise.
8. Believe in what you are doing. Be enthusiastic and remember that everyone in the wider family is equally important.
9. On the day, the older people will entertain themselves, but two or three main attractions would be advisable.
10. The children will want something to do - rides, games etc., so make plans for them.
11. Arrange with the young people to supervise the children's entertainment and assist with the inevitable clean-up at the end of the day.

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*William Whale (cont. from previous page)*

In 1890, he led the church in its move to the City Tabernacle, and was also behind the first Christian Endeavour Society in Australia. Space prevents me from saying too much more about his Brisbane work in this article, but perhaps there will be space in a future issue. But it can be said that he mediated in a number of the bitter strikes of the 1890's, and spoke out on most public issues of the day, including the controversial Kanakas debate. A. Martin said "if he were in politics, he would be the next Premier of Queensland." High praise for one so committed to the gospel of Christ!

# The Small Archive's Companion



*Leo J. Ansell, C.A.C.*

*Church Archivists' Society*

This is a new book published by the Church Archivists' Society and written by its secretary and leader. It is designed as a manual for anyone responsible for caring for a small archive such as would be found in a church, school, college or historical society.

Topics covered in the book include planning, practical procedures, caring for and restoration of fragile materials, research techniques, writing and publishing local church histories, suppliers of materials, and many others.

The 300 page (approx) book will be available about mid-year. The pre-publication price is \$13.75 (up to May 31) plus \$2.25 p. & p. After that it will be \$15.00.

From the Foreword:

The Small Archive's Companion is a comprehensive work designed to explain, in simple terminology and concepts readily understood by the non-specialist, all of the aspects involved in the keeping of archives of churches, historical and genealogical societies and schools. Indeed, the Companion offers advice on a range of topics extending much more widely than the title of the book at first suggests. The comprehensive treatment given to the subject and the non-technical language in which it is presented will ensure that no custodian or curator of archives should feel overwhelmed by the mystique of the Archivist's craft.

Order from the C.A.S., PO Box 756, Toowoomba, 4350.

## B. H. S. Q. MEMBERSHIP

Individuals, churches and other groups are invited to support the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland by becoming members. Members receive the BHSQ Newsletter, and are able to join in the Society's activities and contribute to its historical work.

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*I/we wish to join the Baptist Historical Society of Qld. and to support its work of fostering interest in our local heritage.*

*Please find enclosed our subscription for 1986:*

*Individuals \$5      Families \$8      Churches/Organisations \$20*

Name: .....Address .....

.....Postcode .....

Church.....Phone .....

Historical Interests: .....

Send to: Secretary, BHSQ, c/- 11 Bunda St., Slacks Creek, Q 4127