

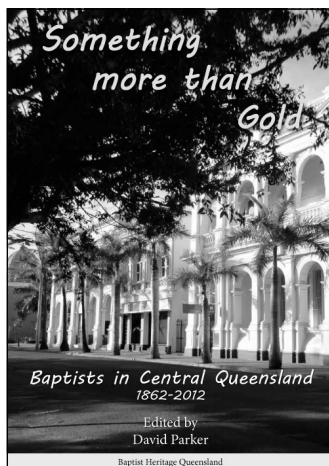
The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of the Baptist Heritage Queensland

No. 81 April 2012

'Something more than Gold'

Ready for launching



A 200 page book telling the story of Baptists in Central Queensland will be launched on Friday May 18 at the QB Convention in Rockhampton. Titled "Something more than Gold", this book contains more than 100 illustrations and several maps. It covers the eleven churches that have existed in Rockhampton and fourteen in the region, as well as the CQ District Association, camping and QBC activities.

It is the first overall coverage of Baptist witness in this area which has seen dedicated work by large number of people, not all of which has survived. Conditions during the 150 years have varied, and in some cases churches have declined and later revived. In other situations, efforts came to nothing, or buildings and ministries passed to other denominations.

The book has been prepared by Baptist Heritage Queensland with the help of a large number of people from the area. In years gone by, a few churches and other ministries have produced their own histories; details from these have been used, but a great deal of new information has been obtained from participants, newspapers and other sources which has incorporated into the book. A guide to more than 30 heritage sites in Rockhampton and nearby has also been prepared and is available on request.

The book contains a Foreword by Rev Dr Chris Ganter, Senior Pastor of Rockhampton Baptist Tabernacle. It will be dedicated by Rev Barry Downes, Associate Pastor of the Tabernacle, who ministered in the city in the 1970s and now has special responsibility for developing ministries in the region.

Pre-publication orders are now being received for the book which costs \$15 plus postage. The 2005 history of Baptists in Queensland, *Pressing on with the Gospel*, is also available as a bundle at \$25 plus postage. Contact Baptist Church Qld Archives, PO Box 6166, Mitchelton Q 4053; archives@qb.com.au or phone 07 3878 3178

A reminder—if you have not paid your 2012 Annual Membership Subscriptions—either pay by cheque to BHQ, 98 Yallambee Rd., Jindalee 4074 or use direct deposit if convenient—please be sure to advise your name and mark deposit as 'sub 2012' Bank details: BSB 704-913 A/c No. 001185 Account - Baptist Historical Society Qld

Please reserve these Meeting dates for 2012: June 16, Nov 3 (AGM) 2pm at Baptist Archives

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Archives—Going Digital

The story of Gatton Baptist Church's history (see page 6) as saved, displayed and recorded by Mrs Eunice Cowell is a remarkable example of what can be achieved by someone dedicated to the task. It is all the more significant because it is a hand written account and illustrated by many pictures taken by the author with a film camera. Surely it means that others with more advanced equipment could equal this, and do more.

The records are mainly paper – minute books, membership rolls, magazines, newspaper clippings and the rest – but increasingly church records are digital



Sue McQuay digitising Windsor Road Baptist Church records at the Baptist Church Archives, Qld

– word processing documents, accounting programmes, spreadsheets, emails, digital pictures and videos. Then there are the uncaptured decisions which were discussed and finalised by mobile phone or text. Digital processing seems to generate many more records than before, and they are scattered around many storages devices such as floppy disks, hard drives, flash memory sticks, or at some web storage site. They are harder to manage and tabulate, and it seems they are near impossible to identify, or to retrieve when needed.

So the task of the Archivist is the same, only different – the same because the need will always be there, as with traditional paper records, to create, preserve, organise and retrieve the vital information about an organisation's life. However it is different because the process is new and unfamiliar and so there are no established procedures; the volume of material is much greater; the storage

processes and locations are more complex; and the requirements for sorting, identifying and retrieving are more elusive. Then there are the huge problems of rapidly changing technology which include hardware that goes obsolete, software needing to be upgraded and storage media that changes and deteriorates. There is also a personnel factor – many more people are involved in the whole process from the original creation of records, through to the selection of material for retention, actual preservation, storage and accession.

Whereas traditional records sat in a filing cabinet and everyone knew how to preserve them and when to move them to the Archives, today the records are invisible and difficult to identify, no one knows who is responsible for them, and the cost of providing storage, management and access and the need for continually updating technology means that it is a forbidding task. We have not even mentioned questions of security and guarantees about authenticity of data or legal issues surrounding what constitutes an official record when it is not exactly the media that it sits on or the digital ones and zeroes that constitutes the original record!

Churches and denominational organisations are moving quickly to a no-paper, digital environment. This means new procedures and policies are needed. Baptist Heritage Queensland and the Baptist Church Archives Qld are working on the problem and have updated their *Guide for Managing Church Records* to reflect the new situation (ask for one!). Briefly, it includes the recommendation that if a church does not have an advanced digital office with sophisticated IT support, it should continue to store its important records in paper form. This means Minutes of core organisations (Deacons/Board/Council and other departments of the church), annual reports, financial statements and key other documents should be printed out on good quality paper and bound strongly. These should be clearly labelled and kept in cool, dry and insect proof condition under the care of an authorised officer of the church, or deposited in the Baptist Archives or other such repository. Books, magazines, photographs, videos and other useful material should be preserved similarly. The church should develop a clear and comprehensive policy on the creation, storage and use of their vital records. This policy needs to be reviewed regularly and the storage conditions and material need to be checked frequently.

Churches that have good IT support should ensure that suitable hardware and software are installed, and adequate storage services acquired. Then staff need to be trained to create appropriate records of the church's business and activities. The files of these records should be carefully selected so that all the key documents are

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Warwick Baptist Church 1911-2011 Centenary Celebrations 18-20 Nov 2011

Bill Hughes, Baptist Heritage Queensland

On 19 November 1911 then President of the Baptist Association of Queensland (now called the Baptist Union of Queensland) conducted the opening services of the newly formed Warwick Baptist Church. On 18-20 November 2011 the church celebrated its centenary with three days of celebrations. Bill Hughes wrote a centenary history for Warwick and also participated in the celebrations. He reports here on the events and our articles also includes some information from his history about the Warwick church.

Warwick – The Rose City

Warwick would have to be one of the most beautiful provincial cities in Australia, and it looked its best in the Spring of 2011 with the roses beginning to bloom down the main street and the gardens and parks around the city looking extra tidy and ablaze with colour.

The citizens of Warwick are a friendly lot and as Roslyn and I wandered around the town a number of people chatted with us and were interested to know the reason for our visit. When we explained that we were there to attend the centenary celebrations of the Warwick Baptist Church, without exception they all seemed to know about the event. We were aware that the church had a large banner on it, in which the centenary was being advertised and assumed that other forms of advertising had also been employed.

People in the main shopping mall in the centre of town (Rose City Mall) seemed to be fully aware of the Baptist church's celebrations. We soon discovered the reason for this. The mall had a large advertisement in a prominent position in one of the main entries. It was difficult to miss, quite large and very colourful, and it caught the eye as we walked past it.

Friday evening 18 November 2011

The 100th Anniversary Celebration Dinner

The weekend commenced on Friday night 18 November at 5.30 pm with a buffet dinner prepared by the church members. After a brief welcome and introduction Pastor Jeff Baills invited two of the church's longest serving members, Mrs Bette Woodrow and Mrs Lorna Shaddock, to cut the magnificent 100 year birthday cake. Both ladies made a short speech about their early years in the church, and slices of cake were distributed to all present.

The dinner was held in the church hall which adjoins the church building. The hall was formerly known as "Protestant Hall" and was a most appropriate location for this preliminary event as it was in the Protestant Hall, on 11 October 1911, that the then



Queensland Superintendent of Home Missions, Rev T U Symonds, met with nine local Baptists and that meeting unanimously decided to ask the Baptist Association of Queensland to form a Baptist Church in Warwick. The hall, therefore, is very much a part of the history of the Baptist Church in Warwick. It was actually purchased by the Warwick Baptist and became a part of the church's property from 18 July 1981.

The church's centenary history book was offered for sale for a bargain price of \$15 from Friday night onwards.

The 100th Anniversary Worship Celebration Service

At 7.00 pm we moved into the church for the celebration service. A very professional group of musicians and singers led us in a period of singing. The hymns and songs reflected the type of music used in worship services in the church in various periods over the past 100 years, presented in order from the oldest to the more recent.

A highlight of the evening was a recorded interview, played on the big screen, with 96 year old Peter Petersen. Mr Petersen has been associated with the



church for 92 years. For the past four years he has lived with his daughter, Ruth, in Melbourne and was unable to travel to Warwick for the celebrations, much to his regret. Mr Petersen's father and grandfather were both Life Deacons of the church and his grandfather, Jens Christian Petersen, was a foundation member of the church. The Petersen family has been associated with the Warwick Baptist Church for all of its one hundred years.

Pastor Jeff Baills gave a brief address on the theme of honouring the past and being empowered for the future. The emphasis, he said, was on what God had achieved in Warwick. Pastor Stephen Ball spoke on behalf of the Baptist Union of Queensland and conveyed the Union's greetings and congratulations to the Warwick Church.

Saturday afternoon 19 November 2011

The Warwick community was invited to join in the celebrations at the "Cowboys" Rugby League Club's grounds on Saturday afternoon. Free entry, free rides for the kids and plenty of food were available for the large crowd who attended over the afternoon and evening. The Saturday afternoon program was:

- 1.00 pm – Celebrations in the Park Commence
- 1.30 pm–3.30 pm - JC Epidemic
- 3.30-4.30 pm – Colin Buchanan
- 5.00-7.00 pm – JC Epidemic
- 7.00-9.00 pm – Steve Grace & his SkyPilot Band

There was something for everyone in the program. The bike riders (JC Epidemic) performed amazing feats and had their audience gasping at times. The kids loved Colin Buchanan, and Steve Grace, as always, was excellent. It was quality entertainment all round!

Sunday Morning Combined Church Service at "Cowboys" 20 November 2011

An invitation had been extended to other churches in Warwick to join with the Baptist Church in a com-

bined church service on Sunday morning. The service commenced at 9.30 am. It was a hot, sunny day and people gathered in the shade of tents erected for the purpose, on the covered patio of the football club rooms and within the football club rooms.

Music was provided by a group from Warwick Baptist and Steve Grace and his band.

Evangelist, Rev Graham Sercombe of Southern Cross Ministries, addressed the crowd and a number of people came forward in response to his invitation to accept Jesus into their lives. Pastor Baills then brought on stage a number of church members who had worked hard over recent times to ensure the celebrations were a success. They certainly were a success, and brought honour on our God.

Warwick – the pre-history

Although the Warwick Church was not established until 1911 there were early connections between the Baptists in Brisbane and Baptists in the Warwick region well before that year. In 1871 Miss Emily Downes from the Jireh Church in Fortitude Valley married Mr Francis Irvine and the couple moved to Warwick, where she started a Sunday School. On 11 October 1878 *The Brisbane Courier* reported that a Baptist Sunday School was operating in Warwick with four teachers and 38 students. The Irvines are said to have tried to establish a Baptist cause in the town at about the same time but without success.

The question of establishing a Baptist Church in Warwick was formally considered by the Baptist Association in the early 1880s when Rev William Moore of the Petrie Terrace Church was sent up there to talk to local Baptists. He strongly urged them to form themselves into a church, but they preferred that their current arrangements should remain for the present (most worshipped with the local Presbyterian Church). However, the Association continued to monitor the situation from then on.

A number of Danish migrants settled in the Free-stone Creek area, 27 kilometres northeast of Warwick from 1870 onwards, and two of them (Jens Peter

Hansen and Jens Christian Petersen) worked to establish a Danish Baptist Church at Freestone Creek. A third man, Anders Christian Jensen, had settled in Brisbane where he joined the Jireh Church and was eventually ordained a Baptist Minister in June 1884. He regularly visited and ministered to the Freestone Baptists from 1886 onwards.

Rev William Higlett visited Freestone Creek in 1886 and formally established ten Danish Baptists into a Baptist Church on 3 November 1886. Anders Jensen became the first pastor and Jens Christian Petersen became the church's Secretary. The Freestone Creek church lasted a little over ten years and eventually closed in 1897. Jens Christian Petersen became a foundation member of the Warwick Baptist church and three generations of the Petersen family served the church in various capacities over most of the one hundred years of the church's life to date.



Sunday Morning Service of Warwick Baptist Centenary

Warwick and its outreach

Warwick church was well known at various times for its vigorous outreach into surrounding districts. Two of the most successful efforts were at Allora and Stanthorpe. Here are edited excerpts from Bill Hughes' centenary history.

Allora. The Allora work was pioneered by Rev E Edwards and was followed up by Rev RG (Dick) Walker. By 1947 services were being held there twice a month and on 3 June 1947 a minute was passed by the Warwick church to accept responsibility for building a new church. It was built using the frame of an old stone church from East Talgai homestead and was constructed with voluntary labour at a cost of £600. The church was opened by Mr C G Sweetman, President of the Baptist Union, on 23 August 1950. In 1953 Rev E Edwards opened a new Sunday School Hall at Allora, which had been built by volunteers at a cost of £500.

Rev John Walker, from London was Allora's first pastor and served the church until 1956. The local newspaper carried the story of Rev Walker's arrival in Allora: "Allora and District Baptists last night warmly welcomed Pastor John Walker, who arrived with his wife and two children from Scotland on the *Cameronia* earlier this week and who has been appointed to take up duty as a member of the Home Mission staff of the Baptist Church at Allora."

Rev H L McIntyre became pastor in 1957 for a short

period and Pastor G I Richardson followed in 1957 and 1958. Warwick's pastor conducted services at Allora from 1959 until the church finally closed. During the 1960s there was an exodus from rural areas throughout Australia and by the mid-1960s Allora had lost all of its members and the church had to be closed in 1970. The manse was sold in 1968. The church building was sold to the Rosewood church for \$900. An allotment of land owned by the church was sold in 1971.



Congregation at Stanthorpe Baptist Church, 1958

Stanthorpe. Rev R G Walker was given much of the credit by the Stanthorpe people for getting the work going in their area, although the Warwick church started initial work in Stanthorpe in the 1920s. The

Saved—the Gatton Story

In 2005, when Gatton Baptist Church was in the process of moving from its original site to its new modern premises in William Street, lots of old, unwanted material was ready for the tip. Then long time member, Mrs Eunice Cowell spotted some books, papers and other objects that she recognized as being valuable items relating to the history of the church. So she rescued these articles and found they were the official record books and other important memorabilia.

Her prompt action not only saved this material from the tip, but led to long process of historical work. First, she cleaned, identified and sorted the documents and other items she had collected. Now that her valuable work of conservation had salvaged the vital records of a church (which has an interesting history), she decided that they ought be accessible to others. The new church premises, formerly a sports centre and then professional offices on the edge of the business district, had a number of rooms which were available for various activities of the church. One of these would be ideal as a Heritage Room which could hold displays of the rescued material and so inspire and remind people of the story of the church. This room had a large window and was adjacent to the main auditorium making it ideal as a display centre. The church leaders agreed to the idea.

So soon Mrs Cowell began arranging photographs, documents, books, posters and other material on the walls and in shelves. One wall was devoted to the early history of the church, while at the back, there were Bibles, hymn and music books, and plaques from the old building. A special place was kept for the Minute Books and church rolls. Other places were found for memorabilia such as posters, collection

boxes, collection plates, programs of events, magazines such as *QB magazine* and *Vision*, and official photographs. The third wall was covered with pictures and displays depicting the church at the time it occupied the new building, especially its missionaries. One item that holds pride of place is a small cross made of nails given to the church by the father of Korean back-packer in grateful thanks for the church's care of the young man.

The history room is also used as the church's prayer room which means lots of people are familiar with its contents, and are surrounded by symbols of the heritage of the church as they pray week by week.

Even though Mrs Cowell had successfully saved, conserved and displayed the story of the church, there was another step in the process – writing up the story so people could read it. So she started on this task, but even here, there were interesting angles to her work. Preparing a history was not foreign to Eunice because she had already written the story of her family – the Mutzleburgs of Blenheim.

Gatton church has a relatively short (although complex) history, dating from the 1930s, but its roots go back much earlier – to the 1880s and 1890s. It was at this time that the first German Baptists were settling in the nearby areas and forming churches at Blenheim and Tent Hill, which joined others already established at Minden, Marburg and Vernor. These churches flourished at different times and their people kept the faith strong. Blenheim reached out to Tent Hill and it was people from there who commenced services in Gatton under the leadership of Rev Will Holmans in 1931. The church was formed in 1935 and the old

building opened in 1937. When Eunice began compiling the history, there were only three other "oldies" left – then in their 80s and 90s; they had been in the church for nearly 60 years; Eunice was a "late comer" joining only in 1957!

With the oral history of these people, her own family story, and information from the saved records, Eunice set about writing the history of the church – she literally wrote it – by hand, in beautiful lettering! Book One consists of 22 pages in a plastic folder taking the story up to 2008. It contains not only the handwritten narrative, but many photographs, cuttings, newspaper reports, lists and diagrams illustrating key events and developments in the church's pilgrimage – both the encouraging events and the sad ones. Book Two continues on



Mrs Eunice Cowell with her history in the Gatton History Room



Cross of Nails—a gift of grateful Korean Dad!

the story with a new chapter added by Eunice every year. Her old film camera is busy at church services and occasions capturing the moment for the history. There are only a few copies of this book – the original and some photo-copied versions.

Activities centred on the William Street building are remarkably different from the old one in Cochrane Street. Now there are multicultural activities, and ministries to back-packers; the TAFE and a physiotherapist use the building; the many different rooms in the building are used for the sound system, cry-room, children's ministry and other activities. An internet café operates and there is a church library. The centre was used extensively during the 2011 floods to assist people at nearby Grantham and other places.

Eunice Cowell saved the history of the church and, with the support of many people, has attractively displayed and recorded it for the future. The church is open during the week so when in Gatton, call in and see their Heritage Room.

(Continued from page 2)

included and readily identifiable. These should then be carefully tagged, backed up and archived to reliable permanent media, catalogued and stored in optimum conditions either at the church or elsewhere. Note that it is important to distinguish between backing up data in case of a disaster such as hardware failure or fire, and the permanent retention of data for archival purposes which requires better arrangements for organisation and retrieval, and for perpetual storage. Specialist advice is needed to ensure that archival quality hardware and software is installed. Help is needed with training all those involved in the process, including any staff who create records as well as those given the responsibility of caring for the records archivally.

Archived electronic records should be under the control of an authorised officer, and come under the same kind of policy as for paper records. It will be necessary to select suitable file formats and media for the storage of documents so that they can be accessed well into the future by people such as officers of the church and researchers wanting information. It will also be necessary for future church officers to be able to access this material so it can be transferred to new media with appropriate software before technology changes and leaves existing software and media obsolescent, thus losing the records and information completely.

In both paper and e-records, full attention should be given to developing a church policy to govern the creation and retention of adequate records. In contrast with earlier times, many discussions and decisions now take place orally, by phone or by email. Furthermore, instead of a group of people working together and coming to a decision about plans and developments, it is more common now for this kind of activity to be handled by an individual without the same kind of record keeping as before. The key elements of oral and email discussion and individual decision making need to be recorded and preserved.

There are many reasons why the recording of this information and the careful preservation of paper and digital records is important. The most obvious that proper and responsible administration of any organisation, especially a church, needs an adequate record of its activities. Then effective planning for the future depends on proper knowledge of the past which is provided by the records of the church. Perhaps the most critical reason for a properly managed Archives system is that church officers and employees need legal protection to cover their activities; the lack of recognized records leaves people vulnerable to costly litigation and embarrassment to the individual and church, and financial cost which could be crippling.

Finally, and most importantly, the life of the church needs to be recorded because it is the testimony of God's people and of God's Kingdom at work – lose that record and we lose an important part of our existence! So the records need to be preserved properly so that people in the future can learn the story of God at work in our midst.

The Jireh Honour Board Stars in Exhibition

The Honour Board from the Jireh Baptist Church has previously featured in these pages (*QB* December 2009, page 41). The board has had an interesting history since the closure of the Jireh church in 1978.

While the 'Queensland Remembers' volunteers of the ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee were located at the Voyager Centre in the historical precinct of the Kedron-Wavell RSL Club, one of the volunteers noticed in a cupboard, a large World War I Honour Board belonging to the Jireh Baptist Church.

Apparently, following the fire at the Baptist Church after its closure, the Honour Board had been taken to a dump. It was discovered there in pieces, rescued and given to the Kedron-Wavell RSL. The RSL then gave it to the Woodworkers' Group which was also located at the Voyager Centre. The woodworkers offered the Honour Board to the Queensland Remembers Project as they were reluctant to use the wood for other purposes. As a couple of the woodworkers were Returned Servicemen, this perhaps explains their reluctance.

When the Queensland Remembers Project moved to the National Storage Sheds at Aspley, there was a shortage of space and it was suggested that the Baptist Church be contacted so see if they would like to have the Honour Board back. The offer was accepted and it was passed on to the Baptist Church Archives.

In November 2011 the Honour Board was lent back to the ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee to



become an important part of the 2011 Remembrance Day Display in the foyer of the Executive Building in George Street. Before it was displayed the board was restored to its original condition and became an impressive part of the Remembrance Day exhibition

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Home Mission listed Stanthorpe in 1919 as a place where it intended to develop a new church, and encouraged the Warwick church to initiate this outreach. By 1929 Pastor C J Kajewski was conducting monthly services there. The work continued during Pastor Doull's time but began to drop away by the end of the 1930s. One of the first campaigns of Rev A J M Howard and the Gospel Waggon in 1946 was to the Granite Belt, where the Gospel team spent some time in personal witnessing and open-air meetings in their first and subsequent visits. Rev Dick Walker, who had joined the Gospel wagon for some of its visits to Stanthorpe, followed up the work by conducting regular services there. The Stanthorpe services continued in the CWA Hall; by June 1951 the Warwick deacons advised the Home Mission Superintendent that a church needed to be established in Stanthorpe.



Later that year the Home Mission announced that Rev Robert A Beeston had been appointed as the first pastor at Stanthorpe, over 30 years after the Warwick church had commenced an outstation there. Rev Beeston was inducted in March 1952. In February 1955 Stanthorpe opened its own church building during the ministry of Rev J C W Ward. It was built on land which had been donated by Mr Zerk of Yandina many years previously.



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