



The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of Baptist Heritage Queensland

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Centenary of Anzac's Gallipoli Landing

This month is the centenary of the landing of Australian, New Zealand and other troops on Gallipoli, which is widely recognized as a highly significant event for the Australian nation. As the Prime Minister of Australia, 1915-1923, Mr William Morris Hughes, was reported to have said, 'Australia was born on the shores of Gallipoli' (<http://www.spirits-of-gallipoli.com/>). In this issue we feature a few articles to mark this occasion. We have also issued an invitation to Queensland Baptist Churches to mark the occasion with commemorative services (story p 3). For those that have World War I honour boards, we invite them to focus on these boards and especially to highlight the men and women who are listed on them, especially any who were on Gallipoli (see our story on 4). We would like to gather these stories and any photographs for publication. We are planning a project which will take shape in coming days to take this process forward, so 'watch this space.'

Thanks for a job well done—and welcome to new faces

We are sorry to report that Dr Ken Smith who has been Secretary and Treasurer of Baptist Heritage Qld since 1996 had a serious health problem just after our annual meeting in 2014 and has had to relinquish his role with BHQ. We say thanks to Ken for a long period of dedicated service as well as his distinctive contributions to the work of the Archives and BHQ in many other ways. We wish him and his wife Helen well in this new phase of life. Ken's last annual report is on page 2.

At the February Planning Meeting BHQ appointed Dr Anne Klose as Secretary and Miss Hope Colegrove as Treasurer of the Society. We welcome these two ladies and thank them for their willingness to assist BHQ in its work. After such a long period under Ken's hand, it will take a while for the new team to settle in and for new arrangements to be made for the various activities.

We are sorry to record the passing of former secretary and keen supporter of BHQ, Mrs Ellen Chataway. See more in our tribute on page 5.

Queensland Baptist Convention Business Day

Due to the difficulties experienced in recent years in mounting an effective display and book table at the QB Convention Business Day, it has been decided not to continue the practice unless better opportunities present themselves in the future. This decision has been taken reluctantly, but it is in recognition that this previously successful avenue for promotion and contact has now disappeared.

2015 Meeting Dates — 13 June; Oct 24 (AGM) 2pm @ Archives! Come with your friends!

Baptist Heritage Queensland

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Baptist Heritage Queensland

30th Annual Secretary's Report

This is the 2014 Annual Secretary's Report which was presented by Dr Ken Smith to our AGM on 8 Nov 2014. Ken was re-elected at that meeting to the position of Secretary-Treasurer, but a very short time after, he suffered a heart attack and he has been unable to continue in the role that he faithfully had carried out since 1996. We express great appreciation for this fine effort, and wish Ken God's blessing in his present state of ill-health.

2014 has seen continued interest in our history by people in Baptist churches throughout Queensland. However there are still large areas of our history which have not been investigated in detail. Since the world is rapidly moving to a situation where nearly all information is accessible online, this has implications for the way historical records and data are stored. A subsequent paragraph will mention our initial steps in this area.

At the beginning of the year we were pleased to hear that one of our members, Dr Anne Klose, had been awarded a PhD from the University of Queensland for her thesis *Joint and Mutual Covenantal Priesthood: A Narrative of Community for Australian Baptist Churches*. She is the first Baptist woman to be honoured in this way, and joins a growing list of Baptists engaged in high-level research into our faith and history.

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the celebration of our 30th Anniversary, held on 31 May at the Queensland Baptist Archives. There were about 30 people present, a nice number to show around the Archives, discuss various issues with, and listen to short talks by several people from positions of influence within Queensland Baptists over the past 30 years. A Question and Answer session followed.

The next publication in the works is about Baptist work in the South-West region of the State, covering roughly the Darling Downs and Granite Belt and west to the border. Baptist work in this region has its own difficulties, and this is reflected in a number of changes of names of churches over the years. Here again the editorial work here is being overseen by David Parker. At this stage we are unable to suggest a date for publication.

We have noted with appreciation that our churches are taking greater interest in celebrating milestones, and would encourage other churches to follow. The collection of local church histories in the Archives is far from complete, and wish to encourage churches to make a permanent record of events. The Union Archivist, Rev. Dr David Parker, is always ready to assist with this.

Following discussions over a number of years, and assisted by the generosity and efforts of David Parker, last year we announced that we now have our own website. With the usual difficulties in early stages the URL has now changed to: <http://www.dparker.net.au/bhsq.htm>

In the area of digital archiving, we have made a start, and purchased an A3 flatbed scanner for the Archives. However many minute books and other documents are only available in hand-written form, and we are considering the best way in which these could be stored in digital form.

There has been little change in the membership of the Society, but we look forward to further interest, as more and more people realise the importance of remembering our Baptist heritage. Officers elected at the Annual meeting in November, 2013 were: President: Mr Eric Kopittke; Secretary/Treasurer: Dr Ken Smith; Publications Officer: Mrs Rosemary Kopittke.

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

The Archives Annual Report presented at the AGM showed that there had been many requests for help and visits to assist churches with their records. The Archives collection had been extended by new acquisitions and its operation improved with new indexes and sorting. There had been several advances in digital archiving, including discussions with Queensland Baptists about a full system of electronic document management. One special feature was the virtual completion of the digitising of The Australian Baptist magazine. There was also another conference of Australian Baptist Archivists held in November 2014. A full copy of this report is available on request. A digest of the two annual reports will appear in the Queensland Baptists' 2015 Report Book.

1915 - The Year that made Australia!

The Prime Minister of Australia, 1915-1923, Mr William Morris Hughes, was reported to have said, 'Australia was born on the shores of Gallipoli' (<http://www.spirits-of-gallipoli.com/>). So to honour that epic development, Australia and its citizens are paying special attention this year to its centenary. Baptist Historical Societies in other states are joining in with research and publication projects. BHQ would like to collect photographs of honour boards from Queensland Baptist churches. The article below is the original text of a piece sent for publication in the 'qb magazine'

This is the centenary year of the Anzacs at Gallipoli – 1915, the year that turned Australia from a former British colony into a country with its own national identity. Although one of the smaller denominations, Baptists were affected by Gallipoli and the Great War just as much as the rest of the community. As people began to join up, churches noticed the loss of workers - some pastors signed up as chaplains or YMCA Welfare Officers, several women volunteered as nurses and large numbers of men joined the AIF.

Very soon, churches began to erect Honour Boards to commemorate their members on active service. In 1917, the Baptist Union printed in its Yearbook a long list of the names of people from the churches who had joined up. Total Baptist membership for the state was only 2600 in 36 churches, but there were about 650 on this list coming from 31 churches. Toowoomba had the highest number, 62; Albion was next, 56. Already there were 50 wounded, 52 dead, 5 POWs, 3 MIA and 7 medal winners. Women numbered 6, with one of them, Sister Beryl Corfield from Maryborough who died of typhoid in Egypt; her name was proudly placed on that church's Honour Board. (photo)



There were many different attitudes towards the war, some of them controversial - one pastor was forced to resign as a consequence of his stance. The war and its aftermath would have profound effects on the people and the churches, but people volunteered for service just the same. One was Luke H. Flood, an orchardist from Thulimbah near Stanthorpe. (photo)

Born in the Logan district, he was brought up in Brisbane and attended the City Tabernacle. He began farming in the Lockyer district and soon after served for two rounds in the Boer War. When the Great War began, he was hard at work on his farm in the Granite Belt, and volunteered to fight again but was considered too old at 39. However, in 1916, as the war situation deteriorated, he was called up, having recently married Bessie Brett. He served on the Western Front until the end of the war.

Although his strong pacifist views were honoured by his assignment to the 4th Pioneers, Class 14 Engineers, he was still in the line of fire in his work of constructing bridges, roads and other infrastructure. Private Flood suffered from trench fever and influenza but there seemed to be no lasting effects. He retained

his strong Christian faith through the ordeal, and made a generous gift to the YMCA on his return in appreciation for the 'blessing bestowed [by them] during the war'.

He returned to the Granite Belt in 1919, resumed his orcharding work, and saw the growth of his family. He did not speak much about the war, or attend Anzac services, but was proud that he

and his two sons (who served in the 2nd War) gave altogether over 12 years to 'king and country'. He died as the result of an accident at the age of 72. His gracious wife, Bessie, lived on until 1975.

Contact with the nearest Baptist church, located in Warwick, was only occasional, so the Flood family supported the local Presbyterian church, which was known for its strong evangelistic and missionary interest. He was thankful that his own family supplied one of these missionaries, while many of his relatives and in-laws were prominent in Christian work.

As was common, Luke's local church had an honour board and his name was at the head of the list, along with about a dozen others from the community. As often happened, with the advent of another war, the Board was replaced with a larger one carrying still more names.

As church buildings have been changed over the years, sometimes these Honour Boards have been removed and placed in storage or even lost. This year, the centenary of the Anzacs, is a good time to bring them out again, refurbish them and reflect on the sacrifice of the people commemorated on them. It is an opportunity for churches to find out more about the service men and women like Luke Flood and Sr. Corfield and give thanks for their lives. Why not hold an ANZAC memorial service in April!

The Baptist Archives would like to collect good clear photographs of these boards for its records and publish them in print and on the internet. Please contact us as soon as possible about the contributing pictures.



Mr L H Flood
(Picture by family)



Honour Boards and their Stories

by Bill Hughes

This is the original text of an article (with extra material) which appeared which in our regular 'Archives' page in *qb magazine*, June 2014



WWI Honour Board, City Tabernacle Baptist Church (Photo RW Hughes)

Does your church have an honour board on which those who fought for Australia in the Wars are named? My church's honour board lists 144 men and women – 59 from World War I and 85 from World War II. The stories behind those names can be quite interesting. Here is one of them.

Charles W Cameron and his wife, Margaret Jane Cameron, lived at Dover Street, Wilston



Cobbers Memorial, Fromelles, Western Front

when he enlisted on 26 November 1915. He had been born in Edinburgh 30 years prior to coming to Brisbane. He was a Company Director, and he and Margaret had two children at that time. He had previously served in the 6th Volunteer Battalion Royal Highlanders in Kirkcaldy in Scotland.

Because of his previous experience he was selected for a higher role in the Army and was sent to Officer training in Duntroon. On 15 August 1916 he was appointed a 2nd Lieutenant. He embarked from Sydney on 25 November 1916 and disembarked at Devonport, UK, on 29 January 1917.

He served at the front in France but contracted a serious case of malaria, and after a period in hospital in England he was invalided home on 27 July 1917. On returning to Australia he was area commander in Ipswich at the rank of Captain until 1922. He then returned to business and later moved to Sydney as a manufacturing chemist.

In January 1929 he and his wife set up a non-denominational mission known as the Greenacre Park Gospel Mission in Greenacre. Greenacre is a suburb 17 kilometres south west of the Sydney CBD near Bankstown. In 1957 the fellowship established by the mission sought affiliation with the Baptist Church and on 12 July 1957 they were constituted as the Greenacre Baptist Church.

Charles Cameron died in Sydney on 11 April 1938 and left a widow, three sons and a daughter. A memorial service was held in the Greenacres Mission Hall.

Why not find out the stories of people on your honour board and be inspired by their bravery and sacrifice? One of our churches is taking the ANZAC centenary very seriously. They want to know all about the men and women on their Honour Board and are releasing periodical "bulletins" telling their individual stories as they discover them and inviting church members to add further information, photos, corrections etc. At the end of this information sharing process they plan to release a booklet containing all of the information collected and to have it available for those wishing to know about the people on the board now and into the future. The idea is for the board to be more than just a list of names. They want the people on it to be remembered.

The Queensland Baptist Voice on the War

Official reports to the Baptist Union Assemblies, 1915, 1916

1915

It has been a year of stress and sorrow, of bereavement and anxiety, but our hope is in God. We earnestly exhort our brethren of the Baptist Denomination and all Christians to petition our Heavenly Father in prayers, fervent and unceasing, that victory may speedily come to the arms of our Nation, and of our Allies in this great fight for the principles of Liberty and Righteousness and Truth.

After 13 months of warfare, such as the world has never before experienced, we, as Baptists, desire to place on record our unswerving loyalty and affection to the Throne and Person of our most Gracious King Emperor, His Majesty George V.

We would express our admiration and highest appreciation of the wonderful work done by the Imperial Army and Navy, and our pride in the heroic deeds of our Australian and New Zealand, Canadian, South African and Indian troops, and of our noble Allies. Our deepest sympathies and our prayers are for the bereaved, and for the wounded.

May God in His infinite mercy help us to cherish a deep love of peace, and ardent devotion to our Country and a profound sympathy for those who fight and suffer on our behalf.

PRAYERS FOR PEACE. The Council felt that it was the duty of all Baptists to pray for peace, so that this calamitous war should cease. To this end Sunday, 22nd November, was proclaimed a day for prayer for peace among the Nations now at war, and for the British Nation in her time of anxiety. The day was observed by our Churches, and resulting in a time of blessing.

CHAPLAINS. The Commonwealth Military Authorities notified the Association that arrangements were being made throughout Australia for the appointment of Chaplains to the Military Forces representing all denominations, and that the Baptist, Congregationalist, and Church of Christ denominations had been grouped together to harmonise with the numerical strength of other denominations. This group were invited to elect Captain Chaplains equal to two from each denomination, with one Lieutenant-Colonel Chaplain to act as supervisor of the representatives of this group. Representing the Baptist Section the Rev. W. Griffiths was appointed

for the Northern Territory, the Rev. Robt. Kerr for Brisbane District, and the Rev. Jas. Mursell, A.T.S., had the honour to be appointed the Lieutenant-Colonel Chaplain.

1916

As part of the great British nation we are still in a period of anguish and suffering caused by the great war, of worry and perplexity in connection with social unrest and industrial upheavals. We have lately marked the second anniversary of the declaration of war, and our nation all round the world has met in public assemblies for prayers and intercession that God would send a lasting peace, and a victory for the cause of religion and righteousness. Progress towards victory is slow, but is sure and satisfactory. Step by step the powers of evil were being undermined and driven back. But ultimate victory could only come when, the nation returns back to God and seeks Him in a spirit of repentance. In every human crisis God has appeared. When the Church has languished a life giving revival visited her. God grant that in our present crisis our nation and all nations may experience a great returning back to God.

Is the Baptist Church during this universal disquiet and national anguish, and sorrow and bereavement, going to meekly succumb to inevitable events, and await the end with sorrowful resignation? By no means. Let us as a Church take it as a special call for a fresh endeavour, with renewed consecration, and with a wider outlook, that we may take our position as pioneers, as Baptists have ever done, to lead the way in settling the present and past war problems - for the honour and glory of God.

Our deepest sympathies are with the bereaved, and for the wounded. May God in His infinite mercy speedily bring an end to this war, and grant a glorious victory for the Allies. It is greatly to the credit of our denomination that in spite of drought, extra cost of living, war taxes, and appeals for charitable works, our brethren have done their duty in temporal affairs, and yet their contributions to their churches have not been diminished.

Mrs Ellen Chataway—A Tribute

We are sorry to record the death of Mrs Ellen Chataway, former secretary and devoted member of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland on 3 Feb 2015 at the age of 88 years. The service was held at Annerley Baptist Church on 13 Feb. Ellen and her late husband, Rev Vince Chataway (dec 2006), volunteered to become Secretary and Treasurer respectively in 1985 when the future of the Society was in doubt. Ellen served for 10 years and Vince for 20, and also supported the many activities of BHQ. Ellen also contributed articles to Forum and was an enthusiastic advocate of our work. After training for the ministry, the Chataways spent 5 years in war-torn Korea in the late 1950s, after which they returned to more pastoral work, especially 10 years at Kalbar, and several important interims.

Revival and the German Baptists of Queensland

This is a simplified version of a paper by Dr David Parker for the International Conference of Baptist Studies, to be held in Manchester, UK in July 2015. The full version will be available on request later.



Revival in Australia

Has there ever been revival in Australia? This is a tricky question about which opinions differ widely. The period of the Billy Graham crusades across Australia in 1959 is often regarded as the best example of at least something near to revival. But the noted revival scholar Stuart Piggin is in no doubt - it was a 'revival and a great one', he affirmed with complete certainty (Stuart Piggin, *Spirit, Word and World: Evangelical Christianity in Australia*, Brunswick East, Acorn Press, 2012, p 171).

The answer to our question depends a great deal on the definition we use. After an elaborate analysis, of the issue, Piggin ends up focusing on the three obvious factors - 'revitalisation of the Church, the conversion of large numbers of unbelievers, and the diminution of sinful practices in the community' as the key components. (p 156)

On this basis he lists 69 places where revival took place in Australia between 1834 and 1905, but there is no documentation provided for these events. The list includes only 4 in Queensland - at Warwick 1873, Toowoomba 1877, Marburg 1881, and amongst the Kanakas 1905, 1906. It seems that there has been nothing (possibly excepting 1959) touching great sections of the nation in the way that many would expect from the celebrated revivals in other times and places.

There is little mention of Baptist churches and communities experiencing revival in the samples given (the most common denomination seems to be Methodist). However, there are plenty of references in Baptist publications to revival, but usually it is a matter of looking back longingly to historic examples in other countries, and expressing earnest hope for a repeat in the future (although this hope cuts out around 1990!).

German Baptists of SE Queensland

This leads us to consider the German Baptists of south east Queensland and the possibility of revival in that community. There is a well known photograph tak-

en in 1905 of a group of no fewer than 52 candidates for baptism, all dressed in white lined up outside the Kalbar church; they were the fruit of a local evangelistic crusade. Was this the kind of occurrence in mind in the references to 'revival' which are scattered throughout the literature of the German Baptists?

There are other reports of sizeable numbers of baptisms in the records of other German Baptist churches. A report from the time of first appearance of German Baptists in Queensland dating to the 1860s, said they caused a stir within the small German community: 'Lutheran ministers were induced to hold prayer meetings themselves, and there was a regular reformation of habits, if not a thorough revival among Germans.' There were many conversions as a result.

It is interesting that the German Baptists grew from this initial group and organised themselves as an association several years before their English counterparts. At its peak, their largest church was much stronger than any of the English ones, apart from the founding Wharf Street church which was numerically anomalous.

German Baptists in City and Country

Favourable government legislation designed to expand the population and economy by attracting new settlers to farming regions resulted in large numbers of Germans arriving in the 1860s. Initially, they mostly lived in the Brisbane area. Some of these began worshipping with the pioneer Wharf Street Baptist church, whose energetic pastor, Rev B G Wilson, welcomed them and actively evangelised amongst them. However, the German group soon developed its own identity and in 1868 separated from Wharf Street because of differences over the doctrine and practice of Communion.

As the new colonial government made land available under attractive terms for farming in the areas west of Ipswich, many of these Brisbane based Germans moved to this district. It is here that the German Baptist churches were set up, with the first ones appearing in the late 1860s at Vernor on the Brisbane River, at Mt Walker and on the Bremer River. As the German Baptists

moved into a second generation, some of the younger families moved to other more distant areas, including the South Burnett, but they did not form German speaking churches there.

Other Christians in these areas were mainly Lutheran, but also Roman Catholic, and after 1883 the Apostolic Church of Queensland, and then the Churches of Christ (often proselytised from the Baptists).

Church Growth

Was there revival among these churches? Take the question of extraordinary growth. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence of rapid growth amongst these churches although firm statistics are not plentiful, and nor is it possible to make precise comparisons with other churches. The most common references are reports of large numbers of conversions and baptisms; the record for Kalbar (see above) was 82 baptisms in 1910.

For example, Mr H Moller reported to the German Baptist founder, JG Oncken, 6 July 1871 that at Normanby Reserve, 'About 4 years ago our congregation consisted of 5 members, while now the number amongst to 60, not counting those outside.' He mentioned a gathering where 25 were converted at which 'the love of God surged through many poor sinners' hearts, which caused us to recall the Pentecost of Jerusalem.'

Overall, the efforts by the Germans to establish churches with modest but adequate buildings and many other activities quite early after the establishment of their farms and communities indicates that they quickly garnered enough strength for this organisational development; soon they replaced these original buildings with larger and much more elaborate ones, with the church at Kalbar being the largest building in the entire district. Over nearly 50 years, they continued to establish churches and outstations in each new district that opened up to farming. Some of these churches grew to a considerable size, even when compared with the English churches in urban areas of the rest of the state.

The case at Zillman's Waterholes may not be all that unusual – this near Brisbane church was depleted by a sudden exodus of many members to the West Moreton area in 1869. However, there were so many new converts immediately afterwards that within only two years they found it necessary to build a church to house the number attending services for which they thought home group meetings might have been sufficient.

Furthermore, they established a conference or association of German churches almost as quickly as the churches were formed. The first effort was in 1869 which covered both the West Moreton churches and the one in Brisbane. Then they worked in conjunction with the English speaking Baptist church in Ipswich to form a 'General Baptist Association' in 1870 to provide a system of ordination in the interests of good church order. This took place some 7 years before the English Baptists formed their Association, even though the English churches preceded the German ones by more than decade!

Some of this growth was based on Baptists who migrated from Germany, but one report said that at Tar-rampa only 30 were Baptists on arrival, but by 1877, the membership was 300!

Many of the converts were young people who needed careful nurture, made more difficult because they were generally poorly educated; Sunday schools and youth groups did not help much. Similarly, the churches lacked good pastoral care as it was not until 1878 that a

full time ordained minister was available to serve them in the person of Rev Hermann Windolf lately arrived from Germany. Previously they had to rely on lay leaders; gifted as some of them were, they were untrained and still had to work their farms as well as lead the churches. Even when other pastor arrived, there were still not enough for all the churches.

Growth came from regular services and the pastoral interest of leaders and members and families; they were reported to be 'indefatigable as bush missionaries.' There were often itinerant evangelists, often English speaking, who visited the churches producing a steady flow of converts; it was reported that there were 'waves of revival' during a visit by one to Marburg in 1884.

Some of the growth may have come from inter-marriage with other denominations, but this practice was generally frowned upon. What did cause some growth was the state of the Lutheran churches in the area at the time – they were poorly organised, fractious, did not have enough pastors and often did not adhere strongly to their own confessional basis. It is revealing that in the Logan District to the south east, where the Lutheran cause was much tighter confessionally and much better organised, Baptists made no inroads at all.

Intense Spirituality

Visitors from the English Baptists often remarked on the intensity of spiritual life at German Baptist conventions and the 'festive' nature of the gatherings. This view was also backed up by reports by the German Baptists themselves to their churches back home. The regular pattern for their Conference sessions was business and fellowship during the day, usually with serious discussion papers on church life, an inspirational service in afternoon and evening followed by a long night of 'revival' extending to the early hours of the next morning. There were similar kinds of gatherings at Easter and Whitsunday as well. At least one report strongly suggests something very close to revival, when it said: 'Their services commenced at 11 a.m. on the 25th [Dec], and continued until half-past 8 the following morning, during which time a good many cried for mercy and several found peace.' So these gatherings were highly important to the participants and they were usually well attended, even though travel was likely to be extremely difficult.

Their first duty upon taking up their land was to clear the thick scrub, build a simple home and get their farm established. Although these were daunting and physically exhausting tasks, they were also quick to establish worship services. Home devotions were vital as well. All this indicated that they placed high value on worship and fellowship as necessities for their spiritual life, which would have produced an intensity of fervour. They often had brass bands and choirs to support their worship and Sankey's song books were not unknown, although with German words.

Furthermore (unlike Lutherans), they did not have to wait for ordained ministers to arrive but appointed local leaders, giving the movement a homespun quality which Rev Hermann Windolf found difficult to cope with when he arrived. The occasional visits of itinerant preachers such as evangelists, ministers and missionaries of the English Baptist Union were usually welcomed as further ways of fostering devotion.

The harsh conditions of daily life and their relative isolation and remoteness, reinforced also by the fact that they were migrants in a strange land with their own cul-

ture, must have given added value and intensity to their Christian fellowship. Factors of this kind no doubt contributed to their characteristic strictness of their church rules and administration of discipline (which often resulted in humble confessions and restorations), and the fact that there were often disagreements amongst people of such strong minds and wills.

Further evidences of their piety included regular prayer meetings and special periods of intense prayer; one church reported five consecutive nights of prayer for overseas missions. It also included their support of evangelistic work locally and further afield, as well as church planting nearby and in new areas.

They also had a keen interest in foreign missions, recognized as a sure sign of revival. Despite not being affluent at all, the Conference appointed a treasurer for missions so they could support financially as well as in prayer the fledgling Queensland Baptist Mission in Bengal. There was even a Women's Missionary Society. It was not surprising therefore that two of their women went overseas in missionary service – one to German a mission in the Cameroon and another to a Queensland based mission in India.

Even if the examples of intense spirituality amongst the German Baptists were not widespread, there were enough to show that revival was in the air. Rev S Blum, who came to Queensland from USA in 1900 certainly sensed it: 'We believe that there is a great deal of genuine piety in the hearts of German Baptists.'

These signs of revival could be attributed in measure to local factors. However some of the people had come from the Templin church in Germany where there had been revival in the few years prior to their departure with hundreds of conversions and baptisms recorded.

Community Impact

If the conversions and piety characteristic of the German Baptists point to the existence of revival in their midst, then there is some difficulty in the case of the third distinguishing feature - beneficial impact on the community, both in terms of the German Baptist community itself and the people around them.

Unfortunately there do not appear to be any of the classic reports stating that 'the hotels are empty and the churches are full'! But it is clear that the churches did manage to hold together and grow for many years; some can report several generations of membership. Mostly the churches were well regarded by their community, and occasionally experienced good will in the form of practical assistance and support at difficult times.

However, there were often tensions within the Baptist Germans, just as there were amongst their Lutheran counterparts, although perhaps not so chronic. The first Lutheran congregation was formed in 1858, but it took them until 1885 to establish functioning denominational organisations, and until 1921 for unity, whereas the Baptists had an organisation by 1869.

Admittedly, the first church at Vernor could not be built in 1870 when initially planned because of a disagreement (and it had to change its site as well). Also, the conference of German Baptists had many incarnations before it matured into an effective entity around 1900 under the leadership of the pastor-missionaries who came from USA. The first ordained minister, Rev H Windolf did not get on with his initial congregation, and upon his transfer to Marburg there was an expulsion of several members (but many were restored later). As Rev S Blum conceded, 'When we are face to face with a

German, we are dealing with obstinate customers.'

However, perhaps the most notorious case of tension within the German Baptist community occurred at Marburg where on one occasion there were rival pastors conducting different services simultaneously in the same building! The result was physical violence which came to the attention of the police and the law courts. Eventually, there were two Baptist churches in the same small town, which for a time refused efforts at mediation. Eventually reconciliation took place and the church continued its witness for a couple more generations.

So the record of beneficial impact on the community and the reputation of the German Baptists for unity among themselves was not so good. Not surprisingly, times of 'peace' were worth noting, and were sometimes accompanied by growth!

The Heritage of Revival

By 1920s, the days of strong growth were over and so were the days of revival - at least in some minds. The Kalbar historian said that after this date 'there is very little spectacular to report - no mass conversions or baptisms as in the early years, no strong revival movement.' This was a reference to the kind of event recalled by one old timer: 'I remember revivals there that would have rejoiced the heart of any Salvationist - something like the Welsh revival of some years ago in miniature.'

By this time the German Baptists were losing their identity as a separate community. There were several factors at work, especially the cessation of immigration, the impact of World War I on Germans in Australia, and increased integration which led to the switch from German to English in the churches. There was also much better communications and improvements to infrastructure lessening the previous isolation.

Another highly significant factor affecting the German churches was the change in rural economy on which they were largely based, resulting in many families moving out of the districts thus weakening the churches numerically.

By this time the churches were appointing Australian pastors (some of them had German backgrounds) and they all became members of the Baptist Union of Queensland. The German Baptist Conference was rendered inactive and finally faded out of view around 1930.

Over the 80 years since then, some of the German churches have ceased to function, while the rest have continued to witness and serve, although sometimes finding it difficult to sustain themselves. Nevertheless, in their 50 year history as a separate group, they performed an important role of evangelising and caring for their own people; as Samuel Blum wisely pointed out:

German Baptist churches must be looked at as a very important factor in evangelising the people of Australia. The time may come when German churches are no more wanted, but for the present we must have them. . . . We believe that the German churches are organs for the slow assimilation of the Germans, and we ought to help them in their work.

Their history of a strong and virile faith characterised by periods of remarkable growth and intense spiritual experiences is a heritage which cannot be taken from them. It ought to be remembered as a vital part of their story, even if this brief overview does prove fully that there was revival in the fullest sense of that term.