



The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of Baptist Heritage Queensland

No. 91 August 2015

Milestones

In this issue of QB Forum we feature a number of milestones—the passing of our former Secretary/Treasurer, statistical developments, Baptist reflections on the Great War, incidents from the life of a loved pastor and especially, church planting in Queensland 150 years ago.

These events from the past are part of our story and part of the foundations on which Baptist witness in Queensland is based. We certainly do well to be informed about them and to learn from them. We could also mention the origins of German Baptist witness which began with the first arrivals 150 years ago almost to the month. One important member of that group is being remembered by his family at Harrisville this month (August 2015) when the descendants of Johann Georg Schneider meet to re-dedicate his lonely grave at Mt Walker and then enjoy a family reunion at Harrisville on August 8. He was the first German Baptist lay preacher in this area and as such, laid a foundation which was able to bear a very significant weight of witness.

In Memoriam—Dr Ken Smith

Just after the April 2015 issue of QB Forum was printed we received news of the passing of Dr Ken Smith, on Wed 4 March, 2015. Ken was Secretary (and then also Treasurer) of Baptist Heritage Qld from 1996 to 2014, and would have served again, but suffered a heart attack the night of our 2014 AGM. A memorial service was held at Fairfield Christian Family church at which BHQ was strongly represented and Dr David Parker spoke on behalf of the Society

Ken was an enthusiastic member of BHQ for many years and supported our historical work in his own inimitable way, as well as many other interests. Virtually as soon as he came to Queensland, he was on the theological college committee as well as serving his own church at Sherwood (and later Inala). Then he became involved in the Department of Community Services, and in time took over leadership of the Social Questions Committee. In his retirement he worked voluntarily at the UQ Chaplaincy Department. He had many other Christian interests, and others related to his professional work.

Ken earned a B.Sc. Degree (1st cl Hons Mathematics) from Sydney University in 1954; M.Sc. from Sydney University in 1955 and a Ph.D. from the University of Queensland in 1975. In later life, he was awarded B.A. (major Studies in Religion) University of Queensland, 1985 and M.Lit.St. (Department of Studies in Religion) in 1990. From 1956-61 he was Scientific Officer, Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough and Bedford, England and then Senior Scientific Officer until 1965. He moved to Brisbane in 1965 to teach Mathematics at the University of Queensland and retired as Senior Lecturer in 1997. He was greatly esteemed by the academic community and was well known as being extremely well read in many areas of science and faith.

(Editor's Note: Ken was also unofficial Baptist Union and BHQ photographer—so we have many photographs of his but no suitable ones of him!)

BHQ—Next meeting - Sat Oct 24 @ 2pm at the Archives- AGM —please bring a plate and a friend

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Figuring Queensland Baptists

By David Parker

Statistics about the number and membership of Baptist Churches in Queensland, as well as details of properties and various dates associated with the churches have been compiled ever since the beginning of the Baptist Union (or Association as it was) in 1877. Even before the Association was formed, statistics were compiled and reported. The figures were presented at the annual Assemblies and printed in official publications such as the Report Book or Year Book and in Assembly papers. The Baptist Church Archives Qld has compiled these figures in an accessible form.

As with any organisational statistics, care must be taken with how these data are used, but overall they provide a comprehensive perspective on the growth and development of Baptists in Queensland.

However, the publication of these sets of figures concluded seven years ago with the 2008 Handbook being the last to list them.

The statistics are still collected by the Baptist Union of Queensland. As the Director of Administrative Services, Phillip McCallum, advised in his weekly *Network* June 18, 2014, the data is used as follows:

- To help understand the relevance and effectiveness of QB churches in reaching the community.
- To provide preparatory information to assist visiting speakers, congregational campaigns and church reviews.
- To assist with planning and cooperation in a wide range of corporate initiatives.
- To enable Queensland Baptists to comply with its requirements to provide statistical information to The Baptist Union of Australia (and in turn Baptist World Alliance), as well as various returns to the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other government campaigns.
- To help Queensland Baptists to respond to the needs for Ministry Leaders and Regional Consultants, and to set a responsible budget for QB operations.
- To enable the calculation of delegate eligibility for each church using the formula contained in the QB constitution.
- To give guidance in regard to the most effective locations for church planting.

There are usually about 10 categories of statistics which report on the number of church members and church attenders, the size and nature of the church community, the number of baptisms, the number of contacts with the wider community, and also financial aspects of the church's life.

In his report to the recent Convention Business day, Phillip McCallum commented on the latest figures, dated June 2014 as follows:

Statistically it has certainly been a good period for the denomination in our state. Reviewing the figures supplied by our churches as at 30th June 2014 tells a positive story.

Overall membership of our churches has grown

by 5.8% to 16,281. Our overall church community (those associated with our church in some direct way) has grown by 2.6% and there has been growth of 3.4% in the under 18's age group.

The average number of people attending our churches on a given weekend has increased by 4.0% to 28,928. The number of baptisms reported has increased slightly to 866 (up 1.2%) and our number of outside contacts – a category that is potentially a little rubbery in definition – has increased by a healthy 8.7% to in excess of 77,000.

Overall our churches also report a growth in offerings of 4.84%, which is well ahead of inflation. It is a matter for thanksgiving to see growth in all these categories across QB.

These figures relate to a total number of 187 churches, 10 up from last year, giving an average size of 87 members. This is unchanged from last year, and higher than 50 years ago but well down on a century earlier (note that not all churches submitted current figures); 45% were under 50, 25% up to 100, 20% up to 200, 7% up to 300, and 5 exceeded 300 (rounded).

At the same session, General Superintendent, Dr David Loder, referred to trends over a longer period of time using these and other data. He said that National Church Life Survey (NCLS) figures showed Queensland Baptist churches attracted a larger attendance; with other churches, about half were fewer than 50 but about half the QB churches were up to 250 and nearly a quarter exceeded 250 attendance. Over the last 5 years, 44% of QB churches were growing, slightly more (45%) were in decline while 11% were static. So this means there is a trend to larger churches. However comparing the 5 year period with just the previous year, the number of declining churches had dropped to only 28.5%, the growing churches was now only 30.8% and the static churches had jumped to 40.7%. Dr Loder also pointed out that total attendance was about 29,000 but only about 60% attended on any given Sunday.

However, he also offered a disclaimer, conceding that the data only gives a limited picture of the situation, especially because the wider context of community and the story of the churches was not taken into consideration; so much more work was needed on these figures before a reliable and useful picture could be obtained.

Dr Loder's report on pastors shows that there is a total of 394 ministers, which is more than 2 for each church! 17 are provisional in some way, and 100 are retired. The 2015 Directory lists show about 3.8% are female. In the now normal category of 'registered minister', 143 are ordained and 119 unordained (most of the former 'accredited' category—either ordained or unordained—are retired, with only 17 out of 117 active).

The church figures for 2015 are being collected, and with them, another opportunity gaining insight into important trends for understanding Baptists in Queensland. They can be used with other data such as Australian Government Census figures and information from the NCLS to give valuable insights about the denomination, its mission and relationship to the wider community.

The Queensland Baptist Voices on the War

We present here some reports from The Australian Baptist printed during the early days of World War I to give further insights into Baptist reactions to the great conflict. (See QB Forum No 90 April 2015 for other samples). This first example comes from the address of the retiring President in 1917, Rev. C J W Moon, and highlights the way war is so much at odds with the Christian faith and calls on Baptists to evangelise mor and use their own particular spiritual gifts to promote Christian values which would counteract the evil of war. (The Australian Baptist 25 Sept 1917). The second example is about demand for the Bible! (AB 10 October 1916)

The great war, its lessons for, and challenge to, the Christian, Church

He said that thrones and systems were being shaken. The Kingdom of Christ was coming, the day of glory was just a little ahead. Australia had never been so shaken by industrial strife as within the past twelve months. There was no doubt we were in the middle of the most colossal upheaval in the world's history. The war was an evidence that civilisation based on materialism must in the end compass its own destruction. Religion, politics, and society were in the melting pot, but there was only one way in which there could be a lasting peace, and that was the Christian way.

Moral and spiritual development were wanted—a change of heart. It was very true that if Europe had been at heart Christian this war would never have broken out. One of the lessons that forced itself upon us was the need of a Christian faith that would be all-prevailing. The world had come for the first time to realise that Christianity possessed that which, if properly and effectively applied, would prevent war.

Let the Church take up the challenge and organise. He pointed out that in a land of great spaces like Queensland young men were wanted who would go out like the apostles of old, and preach the Gospel with tact and power. A true brotherly hearted man would meet with a hearty response in all parts of the country, and from all classes. In this connection, the speaker appealed for more suitable church buildings—for open-air arrangements that would attract those who would not come to the hot, stuffy churches.

The present method of obtaining ministers, he held, was also unsatisfactory, and he claimed that this was a point that needed attention. Many places were suffering through the need of pastors, and with a better

system for ministerial settlement that need not be. It was time to courageously tackle this defect.

Another challenge the war brought to the Christian Churches was to mobilise their forces for Christian service. Human forces should be mobilised not for taking, but for *giving*, life. The time had come when each candidate for church membership should give some guarantee of willingness for real service. Christ had left the charge of His cause in our hands, and had appointed every man his work.

Had we planned a place for every man, and was every man in his place? Some men had a talent for business, but they had no business to hide that talent in the earth. Business men should rise up and take control of the business affairs of the congregation. Some men and women had social gifts. Why not bring them into the Church? There were musical gifts that could carry the Gospel message home. Why were such gifts only for the platform? The call was for a deeper sense of stewardship. Let us respond to this challenge of the war, so that Christianity might mobilise her human forces and resources for the battle of the right against wrong—for Christ against Satan.

There was, too, the challenge to heal the differences that existed between the Churches. Many conferences had been held to discuss a basis of union. There were earnest, sincere, Christlike souls who desired a closer union. Surely there was a *via media*. And if there was we should not delay a moment in seeking it. But let us remember that these could not be uniformity. A uniform expression of Christian life would be very tame, very dull. But blessed unity there could be. He was, firmly convinced that diversity in unity was God's plan. We must not stress the outward and formal, but the inward and spiritual

War and the Gospel by Rev. W.G. Pope

Whatever else is in the melting pot since the war began, the New Testament has come forth into new demand. Like molten iron into which something was added to turn it to steel, the furnace of war has sent out God's Word with an added strength.

From every nation at war comes the news to the great Bible societies that the New Testament has found new readers, with new enlightenment, never so known before. The Russian troops, with the consent and encouragement of the Czar and the Empress, have been receiving New Testaments and Gospels by the million, with a marvellous consequence that cannot yet be told. One of Roumania's royal princesses is distributing with her own hands, special editions of the New Testament to the Roumanian troops. In fact, in nearly every trench of death is to be found one or more copies of the Word of Life.

And now, new and stirring events are taking place in

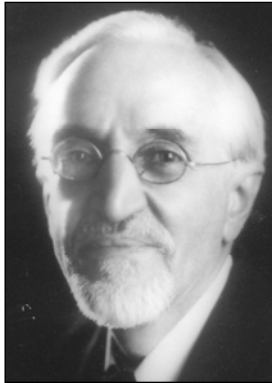
the Russian prison camps of Germany. Some evangelistic Germans, with a view to evangelising the multitude of Slav soldiers in their camps, have learned the Russian language, in order to better reach them. In this they are being greatly aided by Swedish Baptist pastors. The Russian prisoners in Germany have but little literature in their own language, consequently these Swedish preachers are looking elsewhere for Russian Scriptures. The Scripture Gift Mission has been appealed to, to supply two million copies of Russian Gospels and Testaments for prisoners of war in Germany. Confident that they are being wondrously used, they are being issued and sent. The latest news to hand informs us that hundreds of Russian prisoners have found that liberty which only the Gospel can bring.

There is much more news of an encouraging nature to the readers of the *Australian Baptist*, but it cannot be told until after the war; but elsewhere in our columns an appeal is made to help this greatest of causes to the ultimate and permanent peace of the world.

The Bible and the War

Address by Rev William Bell, Retiring President, Queensland Baptist Assembly

Mr Bell was later principal of the Queensland Baptist College; reported in The Australian Baptist, 10 October 1916. This is an interesting message focusing not only on 'the just war' but also the challenge of moral and spiritual renewal at home, discipleship, and pastorally, the hope of the resurrection



Rev Wm Bell, MA

The Rev William Bell, the retiring President of the Baptist Association of Queensland, delivered, in the City Tabernacle, on Friday evening, the customary address prior to handing over his office to his successor. There was a large congregation, and the Rev A C Jarvis (Vice-President) presided. The retiring President took as the subject of his address, 'The Bible and the War'

He said he was satisfied that every thoughtful person must realise that the world could not be the same after the war as it had been previously. There was reason to hope that one effect of the war would be to make the Bible a more interesting book, and that in future it would more than ever before help faith, stimulate hope, and inspire appropriate action.

The history of the Israelites showed clearly that God did not despise the instrumentality of war in the carrying out of His purposes. Some people might say, 'We live for a higher law. Our authority is not Moses, but Christ,' and he was quite willing to grant that. It was true that Christians were told to turn the other cheek to the smiter, to let the man who took one's coat take the cloak also, and to go voluntarily the second mile after one had been compelled to go the first; but this was an appeal for personal forbearance and magnanimity only.

There was nothing in Christ's teaching which would justify a man in sacrificing the rights of others. If a scoundrelly ruffian appeared at a man's door and threatened violence to his wife or children the man surely would not go to the Sermon on the Mount for guidance as to how he should act! Under such circumstances it would be well to act on another piece of Biblical advice—'He that hath no sword let him buy one.' For Great Britain to have looked on while Belgium was over run and crushed by a fierce and cruel tyrant would not have been not forbearance, but cowardice. And the nation which would not strike a blow for such treasures as truth, justice, and freedom forfeited all right to possess them. (Hear, hear.)

'Peace at any price,' was the cry of some, and to that he would say, 'Yes, peace at any price, even at the price of war.' But while the Bible did not forbid a righteous war, it did not encourage them to look on the issue as likely to be decided merely by brute force, or even by human skill and efficiency. If he were addressing a meeting of citizens he would say that whatever service their country required of her able-bodied manhood for the winning of the war she was entitled to ask for. (Hear, hear.)

But he was not addressing a meeting of citizens; he was speaking to representatives of the Christian Church.

They should remember that in any struggle which had righteousness as its objective God was the main factor, and He was not necessarily the God of the big battalions and the 10 inch guns. There were a hundred ways in which God could get His hand in to affect the fortunes of war apart from the mere clash of arms.

Apropos of that, he asked, 'Does the Church of today believe in prayer as it should?' He feared that it did not. Surely it was the prime duty of the Church at such a time as this to take to itself the high priestly office of intercession, and to go into the holy place confessing the sins of the people and interceding for mercy.

Were they qualified as a nation to attempt to crush the arrogance and tyranny of their foes while they allowed an enemy of God and man to stalk about freely in their midst? Strong drink had slain more men in the British Dominions than all the wars in the Empire's history, and while this iniquity continued could they hope to fight their way speedily to a righteous peace? It was not necessary for him to say that the churches of the Baptist Association were to a man behind the temperance organisations in their efforts to obtain legislative action for the suppression of the liquor traffic.

It would be well for the Government to understand that the people of Queensland were determined either to lever them out of their hesitancy, or to apply some explosive which would scatter them from the halls of legislature until they learned that Queenslanders meant to be a sober people (Hear, hear) And the effort of the Church at this time must be to preach out the drink traffic, and to cut down pleasure to that point at which it administered to the efficiency of every one, and stimulated zeal for every form of civic righteousness in the community.

Another lesson the Bible taught was that a nation could not allow its conscience to become dull without moral deterioration, and he feared that was the condition of the British people at the beginning of the war. But the war had given them an exhibition of moral evil that surely had awakened them! He hoped that the Bible would reassert its supremacy as the very word of God to sinful man.

The war had shaken the faith of many people because it had come after 19 centuries of Christian teaching; but the city of God was not to be reached along a road of quiet pilgrimage, but through many troubles and trials of nations as well as of individuals would bring home to many wounded hearts, and that was the truth of immortality.

What about the men whose sacrifice in the cause of truth and justice had amounted to the surrender of life itself? Was death to be the period of their activities? The Bible told them that eternal life was the gift of Jesus Christ; but he believed that many a brave young fellow who previously had had little consciousness of God had been awakened on the battlefield to realities, and thus achieved salvation.

A Decade of Church growth 150 Years Ago

By David Parker

150th Milestones

We have marked some important milestones in Baptist church life in recent years. We began in 2005 with the 150th anniversary of formation of the first Baptist church in Queensland, the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, originally known as Brisbane Baptist Church, and after that as Wharf Street Baptist Church. It was founded in August 1885 although it had pre-history going back to 1849 when Rev Charles Stewart and other Baptists, along with Presbyterians and Congregationalists formed the United Evangelical Church (UEC). We celebrated the 150th anniversary of the origins of the UEC and the erection of its building with an inter-denominational gathering in 1999 and the erection of a commemorative plaque on the site of the church building.

In 2009 we marked the formation of the second Baptist church, Ipswich. It was established in 1859, making it the first in the new colony of 'Queensland' – Wharf St was in NSW! Then in 2011 came the anniversary of the Jireh Particular Baptist Church, which operated in Gipps Street, Fortitude Valley from 1861 until its closure in 1978; the building, dating from 1862, was destroyed by fire in 1987 and the site is now occupied by a back-packers hostel. The next celebration was at Rockhampton in 2012, marking the formation of that church in 1862. A short lived fellowship in Maryborough began in 1860 but it did not survive very long so its anniversary will date from the formation of the permanent church in 1883.

Annerley 1865 - photos of original and later and annerley rd

This year, 2015, is the turn for the Annerley Baptist Church which was initially known as the Fairfield Baptist Church. As the newspapers of the day reported, it began in 1865 with a wooden building seating 100 erected near the present day Fairfield Railway Station, on a rise overlooking market gardens and farms opposite Five Mile Rocks in river. Opened at Christmas time, the building cost £200 but was free of debt due to a vigorous appeal by the chairman of the first meeting, Rev. William Moore. On Boxing Day, there was another service and a big lunch attended by about 170 people who enjoyed free transport from the city.

Services had been held in local homes for some years earlier and only three months before a Sunday School had commenced. The work was pioneered by George and Samuel Grimes, members of one of the leading families in Baptist circles of those days and also influential in the wider business and political community. Later, with a larger church dating from 1888, the fellowship was associated with the Baptist Union Home Mission (possibly around 1907) and then with the South Brisbane church (now Church@TheGabbra). In 1912, the church was consti-



Original Fairfield Baptist Church located near current position of Fairfield Railway Station

tuted as an independent fellowship. It relocated to its present position in Annerley Road in 1934 during the long ministry of Rev. Ralph Sayce, which also involved the change of its name to Annerley Baptist Church.

However, development in the Fairfield area soon led to the establishment of another new church in Fairfield Road which was constituted in 1953. It was relocated to Cross Street, after being inundated in 1974 flood and is now known as the Fairfield Christian Family.

Oxley 1864 – diagram of area

Fairfield/Annerley church is one that has survived to the present, but in the fluster of outreach in the 1860s, several did not. One was at Sherwood near Tennyson, at the junction of Oxley Creek and the Brisbane River; today, Pamphlett Bridge (erected only in 1964) spans the creek next to an attractive park on Graceville Avenue. The Oxley Creek Baptist church opened on Sunday 22 May, 1864, with another dedication service on Queen's Birthday, 24 May. The building cost £85, but there was still a £10 debt at the opening which was once again chaired by Rev. William Moore and attended by a large crowd.

At the first anniversary celebrated on 16 June 1865, four boats left Turbot Street ferry in the city to transport visitors to the site, but even then, it was necessary for the men to walk along the banks of the river to allow room for the women and children to ride on the boats. At the church, there was entertainment including cricket and swings, and with a crowd of more than 120, the meal had to be served in several sittings and the service itself was moved outdoors. A special collection cleared the debt.

The building was used by many other denominations, especially the Presbyterians, for some years, but with changes in the population, establishment of other churches, and difficulties of obtaining regular preachers, the work closed at some unknown date and the building disappeared.

Edward Street 1865 – photo of church

Another of these 1860s churches proved to be one of shortest lived – the Edward Street Baptist Church dating as a fellowship from 1865. The first official history of Baptists in Queensland virtually wrote this church out of the story, but more information about it has come to hand over the years, especially lately. (see full story in our issue of April 2010)

In brief - many members left the Wharf Street church following a major dispute in 1864, and togeth-



Edward Street Brisbane in 1872, showing Edward Street Baptist Church on right foreground with Temperance Hall behind, separated by a cottage

er with others, including new arrivals in the colony, formed a new church in April 1865. They erected a building in Edward Street on land leased from the Temperance Hall (opened in 1865) just up from the corner with Ann Street on the southern side of the street. It cost £330, and it was opened on 23 Jan 1866. This was the first church designed by Richard Gailey who went on to design many more churches, especially Baptist, including the City Tabernacle and Sandgate.

This church was located where the Mincom Building now stands, close to what was the Canberra Hotel for many years. The Canberra, which replaced the old Temperance Hall, was opened on 20 July 1929 by the Queensland Prohibition League (later The Temperance League) as a 'dry' hotel. Many people held their wedding reception there (including Joh and Flo Bjelke-Petersen and the present author). It was sold in 1985 and closed for demolition two years later.

The Edward Street fellowship did not use their new building for very long – in 1868 it was used by a Free Church of England congregation and then later became the official Synod Hall for the Diocese. Over the years it was also hired out for many functions. Interestingly, another chapel was erected in Edward Street about 1883 and shows up in the panorama of Brisbane from the old Windmill taken by photographer Alfred Elliott recently displayed at the Museum of Brisbane; this was a 'mission church' for the Female Refuge and originally faced Turbot Street, but it was rotated around through 90 degrees not long before the Elliott photograph was taken.

After the Edward Street Baptist building was handed over to the Anglicans, its members dispersed but a majority formed a new church and eventually found at a new site in Fortescue Street, Spring Hill. Here, Richard Gailey once again designed a church for them, opened in 1876. The Fortescue Street Bap-

tist Church flourished for many years as an important church. It was virtually the original Edward Street church and was known as such in some circles, although others of the original fellowship became part of other new churches, including Petrie Terrace and South Brisbane.

The Fortescue Street church closed in 1885, but its building lived on when it was moved to Nundah and was used for the new fellowship there for many years. The building still exists in Chapel Street, next to the current North East Baptist Church (comprising the old Nundah and Wavell Heights churches), having been used for several different purposes including as a church again; its distinctive gable is still visible but the front porch area and the interior have been extensively modified.

Petrie Terrace – photo

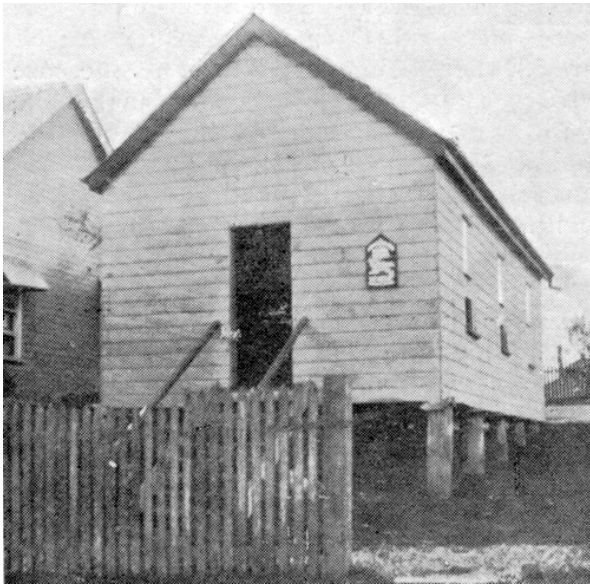
Petrie Terrace was another church dating from the



Former Petrie Terrace Baptist Church dating from 1895

1860s. In 1867, Mr William Grimes began a Sunday School and Band of Hope near his home in Princess St, Petrie Terrace. With William Moore as his assistant, the work grew quickly and soon more room was needed. So Mr Moore made available an allotment of land nearby on what is now Chapel Street, and money was raised to erect a building, which was opened on 26 December 1869, free of debt. In the meantime, services were held, with the first communion service being held as early as April 1865, and the children's work flourished. There were also temperance activities and ministry in the local area. This fellowship had the support of the Edward St church.

It was formally constituted in June 1870, and a new and larger building was erected in 1895 facing what is now Lang Park. The church grew steadily for many years, but it was eventually sidelined by the changing neighbourhood and road construction; after a long period as a struggling cause, interrupted occasionally by a spurt in growth, it closed in 1991. The building remains in situ having been converted to a two-unit domestic residence.



Bulimba Baptist Church

Bulimba

Another church with a long life but no longer surviving was Bulimba. Its building was also one of the earliest in the decade. The work there was initiated by James Johnston and his family who had first arrived in Brisbane with the Lang pioneers in 1849, when they were Presbyterians. They converted to the Baptist church under the ministry of Rev. B. G. Wilson and soon made their river front home at Bulimba available for services, led in the first place by Rev. William Moore. These services were well attended by people living in this area and it was not long before more space was needed. So the Johnstons, who had supported the work so strongly all along, made a block of land from their farm (in Henderson Street) available for the erection of a chapel in mid-1862.

Services continued and were the responsibility of different churches over the years including Edward St/Fortescue Street, Jireh, Petrie Terrace and Wharf Street once again. In time it came under the Baptist Union Home Mission. The building was renovated and enlarged in 1886. Attendance was never very high and it was not until 1940 that it was formally constituted as a church. However, there was a boost in the late 1950s following the Billy Graham Crusade and with development in the surrounding area it was decided to relocate to a larger site on Lytton Road, Balmoral.

The new facility was opened in 1960, where after a few years, a merger took place with the Norman Park Church (dating from 1943). The new fellowship was called Carey Baptist Church and was located at the Lytton Road site. This church survived until 2012, when it ceased operation due to declining numbers, 150 years after the opening of its first building.

German Baptists

The German Baptists have their beginnings also in the 1860s. A group of three Baptist families from Templin, Prussia arrived in Brisbane in May 1865, constituting another sesqui-centenary point for this

year. After a couple of years, when more had reached the colony, they were meeting regularly as a fellowship in association with Wharf Street Baptist Church. There were many conversions and baptisms. In 1868 they formed a separate group, using a run-down chapel elsewhere in the town for their gatherings.

Around 1867, there were also other German Baptists living near Normanby Reserve near Harrisville out from Ipswich who began gathering as well. This development was supplemented strongly by a large movement of Germans, including Baptists, who relocated from the Nundah area to Fernvale when new opportunities for farming opened up. This resulted in regular services and other gatherings in various areas, and even a move to develop an association of Baptist church with a formal meeting for this purpose on Christmas Day 1869.

These early efforts produced lasting fruit as several strong and growing churches emerged in later years at places like Marburg, Minden, Kalbar, Boonah and Tent Hill. These churches formed a strong and highly distinctive Baptist movement within the West Moreton area. In time they integrated with the English-speaking Baptist churches where their contributions and influence were highly conspicuous.

Organisationally, their initial 1869 association was later replaced by the 'General Baptist Association', the first formal Baptist Union in Queensland, a multi-cultural group based in Ipswich serving the German, English and Welsh churches of the area. Although this association did not last very long, it did play a useful role for its members, and was in existence several years before the Baptist Association of Queensland (now Baptist Union) was formed in 1877. The association of German Baptist churches became better established later still as the German Baptist Conference. This Conference had a history of growth and stagnation, surviving well in to the 1920s, but at its best, it was an effective organisation to mobilise and strengthen the German churches. The German Baptists of Queensland are therefore another important group which can celebrate their origins 150 years ago.

Plenty of activity

There were other fellowships and preaching stations under development as well, which would grow during the following years, some into promising churches although others were destined to be short-lived. These places included Pimpama, Enoggera, Sandgate and South Brisbane. There were others including Toowoomba which would also start from a fresh foundation in the 1870s.

The 1860s was the first full decade of life for the newly separated colony of Queensland. Not only was there natural economic and social development due to this advance, but gold was discovered in 1867. The population of Brisbane town doubled from about 6000 in 1861 to over 12,000 in 1864, although fires destroyed many old timber buildings in the central business area in 1863 and especially in 1864; rebuilding after these disasters took place in stone and brick.

The natural growth of the Brisbane and surround-

ing districts was enough to give rise to the expansion of Baptist work, but special recognition must be given to the minister of Wharf St, Rev Benjamin G Wilson, who took the initiative to promote Baptist outreach. He had powerful sense of call to evangelising Queensland – perhaps sometimes to the detriment of his home church – and was extremely busy in establishing preaching places and acquiring property for them. But he was assisted by many others who carried out much of the regular work of establishing and maintaining these preaching places.

Although Wilson was well regarded, there were difficulties, as is indicated by the dissension in his church in 1864. As this caused people to move out of the Wharf Street church, church planting resulted. Despite the regrettable aspects of this turmoil, it must be acknowledged that many of the people involved were talented, energetic and dedicated to the cause of the Christian witness. So it was not surprising that they did all they could to expand Baptist witness, taking over many of the outstations that Wharf Street had initiated.

One of the most effective and faithful of these

people was William Moore who established and was the first pastor of the Petrie Terrace and Rosalie churches. He also helped set up the church in Toowoomba, and was a tireless worker at preaching stations around Brisbane. Much of his work was in the nature of ‘helping out where needed’. For example, he assisted in the early years at Taringa by conducting monthly communion services over a few years in the 1890s when he was in his seventies. A number of Brisbane churches owe their existence to men like Moore.

This was a great period of growth but it was inevitable there would be some settling down in time. Although some churches, such as Oxley Creek did not survive, it and others showed that the Baptists of this period, though small in number and without much property or finance, were determined to do what they could to extend the Kingdom of God in any way possible.

The Story behind the Photo—Rev Albert Butler

City Tabernacle Baptist Church

By Faith Colegrove



I could say that the photograph of Rev Albert Butler which hung in the Choir Vestry at the City Tabernacle Baptist Church fell down, caused by an age-related deterioration of the hanging wire. The glass broke and scratched the photo. When it was discovered that one of the Church members knew something about reprinting and fixing defects, the job of reframing was given to her, and permission given to donate the original photo to the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland. However, the story is not that simple.

Cast your mind back to the Second World War when Albert Butler was the Minister at the City Tabernacle. In his congregation was Dorothy Hancox who had met a US serviceman, Sergeant Theron Colegrove, while stationed in Brisbane. They believed God would have them marry. So they asked Rev Albert Butler to marry them in Dorothy's home, not her church, because it would not sound good to Theron's mother and friends back home as they were Wesleyan Methodists who disapproved of Baptists and their theology.

As the date set for their wedding, 27 October 1944, was fast approaching, Theron, a radio operator on board a leaky merchant ship, was coming back from the war in the Philippines, when he was told that the ship would not be pulling into Brisbane but would be going straight to Melbourne. He sent a message to Dorothy to say that they couldn't be married on the appointed day. However, she believed that God had set the date, and she was right, as a couple of miracles will attest.

On 26 October, the day before their wedding, the ship got salt water in its fresh water tank and called briefly into Brisbane to replenish the supply. The gang plank went down, Theron got off, his replacement got on, and away she sailed.

Come 27 October 1944, the day of the wedding, the original wedding papers had not arrived back from the USA. Rev Albert Butler was much perplexed as to whether he should marry them on duplicate papers. Dorothy burst into tears at this news. Albert Butler took a leap of faith and performed the wedding ceremony in the bride's home at 33 Confederate Street, Red Hill. He could not have foreseen that the daughter of this union, Hope Colegrove, would still be living at the same address, would become a member of the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, and one day, many years after, renovate and rehang his photo.

God bless you Albert Butler.

Note - The original marriage papers did not arrive in Brisbane until months after the wedding. It is suspected that they went to *Austria* instead of *Australia*.