



# The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of Baptist Heritage Queensland

No. 92 December 2015

## News and Notes

This issue contains our Annual Report but we can update it to say that after stepping into the secretary's position at the beginning of the year, Dr Anne Klose has now passed this role to Bill Hughes, who is our hard working and devoted researcher and writer. He has just published his latest book, this time on Rev William Moore, which features in this edition.

We are now hard at work developing our digital archives. In particular, Bill Hughes is working at scanning our photographic collection. We hope to have further advances in the transition soon. We expect that this experience will place us in a good position for encouraging churches affiliated with QB to manage their current digital records better. In the meantime, we are thankful to QB for providing an additional computer and software to facilitate this work. There has been a steady flow of enquires to the Archives this year and some accessions of material, all of which has made for a busy year. We invite readers to offer their help for more of our projects so that we can be even more productive.

There will be another meeting of national Baptist state Archivists in November where matters of common interest and concern will form the focus of attention.

We apologise for getting our Treasurer, Hope Colegrove's name wrong in the last issue.

Please check for our annual subscription renewal slip in this issue, and also the opportunity to receive *Forum* as a PDF by email in the future.

## Baptist Heritage Queensland Annual Report 24 October 2015

The year 2015 has seen a change of officers due to the death of Dr Ken Smith on 4 March 2015. He took ill on the evening of the Annual Meeting 2014 after having been re-appointed to the position of Secretary/Treasurer earlier in the day. He was not able to take up his duties at all. Sympathy and support was expressed to Helen Smith and the family, and BHQ was well represented at the funeral. Dr Smith had been an enthusiastic and devoted member for a very long time and had served as Secretary and then as Secretary/Treasurer since 1996. He had also been highly active in several other areas of Baptist Union life.

At a special election in February, when it was clear that Dr Smith would not be able to serve in his position, Dr Anne Klose was appointed Secretary and Miss Hope Colegrove as Treasurer. Eric Kopittke was appointed to a further term at the 2014 AGM as President and Rosemary Kopittke as publications officer.

A full review of the financial situation of BHQ has been conducted during the year, showing it to be healthy; some adjustments made to the investments for greater consolidation and convenience. The only major items of expenditure this year have been the usual postage and printing costs and a large scanner for use in the

*(Continued on page 8)*

**BHQ—Meetings 2016: 19 March; 18 June; 29 October (AGM) all 2pm @The Baptist Archives**

### **Baptist Heritage Queensland**

(est. 1984)

#### **Membership (2016)**

Individual \$10 pa Family \$15 pa Corporate \$20 pa

*Qld Baptist Forum 3 issues pa*

Free to Members Others \$2 each posted

**President:** Mr Eric W. Kopittke 98 Yallambee Rd.,  
Jindalee 4074 Ph 3376 4339 kopittke@tpg.com.au

**Secretary:** Bill Hughes, 7 Dalziel St.,  
Nundah 4012 Ph 3256 8897 Mob 0409 915 685

roslynbill@bigpond.com

Website: <http://dparker.net.au/bhsq.htm>

Archives contact: [archives@qb.com.au](mailto:archives@qb.com.au)

Ph 3354 5642

### **CONTENTS**

#### **Qld Baptist Forum**

#### **No 92 December 2015**

News and Notes	p 1
Annual Report 2015, BHQ	p 1
Schneider Family Reunion & JG Schneider grave rededication	
JG Schneider—an Appreciation	p 2
by Peter Whitehead	p 3
William Moore by R W (Bill) Hughes	p 4
Highfields—the short story by David Parker	p 6

## ***Johann Georg Schneider, Pioneer German Lay Preacher celebrated at 150 year Family Reunion***

Hundreds of descendants and family members of the pioneer German Baptist lay preacher, Johann Georg Schneider, gathered for a reunion on 8 August 2015 commemorating 150 years since his arrival in Queensland. The function included the re-dedication of his grave, sited in a paddock on a farm on Greys Plains Road, Merryvale, south-west of Rosewood. The service was conducted by Rev Dr David Parker, director of the Baptist Church Archives, Qld.

Mr Schneider died in 1878 and for many years his grave site was not identified. It was first marked with a wooden cross and concrete slab and name plaque in a service arranged by the Harrisville and District Historical Society and the Baptist churches at Boonah and Coleyville. This service was conducted by Rev R J Paulsen on 20 September 1970, and consisted of Scripture readings (from Mt. 5, Heb. 12 and Psalm



145), prayer, the hymns 'Stand up and bless the Lord', and 'Men true of heart and strong in faith'. The main feature was the unveiling of the plaque commemorating the life of Mr Schneider and his ministry as the 'first Baptist pastor' in the district.

The printed order of service carried a 2 page biography, describing his significance and ministry along with family details. One unfortunate aspect of the program and the plaque is that they named Mr Schneider's birthplace as 'Wurtenburg' which was said to be 'a town made famous by the actions of Martin Luther' in the Reformation. In fact, that town was Wittenberg in Saxony! Mr Schneider was not born anywhere near there, but at Ellhofen in the state of Baden-Württemberg – about 450 km to the south west.

Over the years since that original dedication service, the cross had deteriorated (although the grave itself and the plaque remained in good condition). The 150 year reunion of the Schneider family provided the opportunity to replace it with a new one. Mr Ken Mandelkow of Coleyville provided and erected the new more substantial cross which was dedicated during the recent service.

The re-dedication service included the singing of the hymn, 'O God our Help in Ages past', accompa-

nied on a piano-accordion by a descendant. There were also Scripture readings, prayer and a statement about the ministry of Mr Schneider and the heritage of himself, his family and his fellow-Baptists who established virile churches in the West Moreton and Fassifern districts. After the service, family members moved to Harrisville where they held a day long reunion with another tribute to their ancestor by Dr Parker, speeches and family reminiscences. There were many displays of memorabilia, and a special opening of the local historical museum. A sum of over \$600 was raised during the day which was donated to Kalbar Baptist Church to help with the restoration of their historical cemetery.

Mr Schneider was born on 25 October 1810. He arrived in Brisbane on 17 August 1865 with his wife and five of their younger children (the eldest had come to Australia a year earlier). He and his boys were employed in a variety of work in the district, including employment on the first railway line in Queensland (Ipswich to Grandchester) and also as stone masons on Parliament House in Brisbane. Then in 1873, Mr Schneider selected 120 acres of land at Franklyn Vale which he developed and where he resided until his death on 4 April, 1878. It is believed that he suffered a collapse while on pastoral work and struggled to reach his home, where his condition proved fatal. He was buried in the lonely grave on his property the next day.

As well as carrying on this hard physical work, Mr Schneider exercised a wide ministry of evangelism, preaching and pastoral care, travelling extensively by horse-back in the process. This was not only a demanding ministry in physical terms, but also one that required much courage and faith in view of the spiritual difficulties faced here in Queensland, as well as those the family would have endured prior to leaving their fatherland.

Mr Schneider was well respected for his Christian character and amongst many others, baptised two key long time pastors, Carl Kruger and Wilhelm Peters. He is remembered by Baptists today as a key pioneer in the origins of the German Baptist work which became an important part of Queensland Baptist life. The Baptist church at Coleyville, also known as Mt Walker, dated itself from 1868, making it one of the earliest in the state. It flourished strongly at first but then declined as newer churches were opened at Kalbar and Boonah to serve the needs of the expanding German Baptist population. Coleyville church was originally located beside the cemetery but in 1910 a new chapel was erected on the main road. Support declined and the church closed after serving for a century, with the building being sold and converted into a domestic residence.

On the next page, Peter Whitehead, a descendant of the Schneider and Dickfos families, writes about this movement, with interesting details about the location of the first ever services.

## **Johann Georg Schneider—Appreciation from a Descendant** **By Peter Whitehead**

*Peter Whitehead, a descendant of the Schneider and Dickfos families, writes about the German Baptist movement, with interesting details about the location of the first ever services.*



The separation of Queensland from NSW in 1859 was a time of celebration, but also a period of challenges – not least among them the impoverished financial position and sparse population base of the newly formed colony. One solution adopted by the fledgling government was to encourage immigrants who would take on the task of opening up and developing the land. This saw the Queensland government from the 1860's seek to encourage German migrants to make a new home across the sea. Seen as hard-working and God fearing, they were considered ideal to help develop the new colony. Assisted by schemes such as that run by John Dunmore Lang (head of the Presbyterian Church in Australia), and promises of government land grants, large numbers of Germans migrated to Queensland in the years prior to WW1.

Perhaps not surprisingly, they tended to settle together in pockets of German communities in areas such as the Fassifern Valley, Laidley and Boonah areas. Many of these German families had migrated from the same villages or districts (such as the Uckermark area of NE Germany), had made the journey together on the same sailing vessels (such as the 'Sophie' and 'Caesar Godeffroy'), and their families had become neighbours and intermarried in the new land. This created tightly-knit communities that provided strength and support for these early German migrants. Strong in their Christian faith, these communities planted some of the earliest Baptist churches in Queensland. (These ultimately joined together to form the German Baptist Conference, an experience unique to Queensland where German Baptist churches formed their own association as an alternative to the English speaking Baptist Union).

Two families who typify the experience of the German families settling in the "Normanby Reserve" (now Mutdapilly area) are the Schneider and Dickfos families who migrated to Queensland 150 years ago. Like so many other families, they took up government land grants ranging in size to about 200 acres, and through sheer determination and hard work cleared the land for farming. They were also strongly involved in establishing the Baptist church in their new home.

Early church meetings took place without the benefits of ordained ministers or church buildings. Oral history suggests the earliest Baptist Church services in this area took place in "Robertson's Barn" which was a slab and shingle building (built by Johann Georg Schneider and his son Fred) located on a property known as "Glenbrae". This property on the corner of what is now the Cunningham Highway and Coleyville Road is the oldest surviving building at Mutdapilly. It was owned by

Thomas Robertson, who in 1869 married Friedricke Wilhelmine (Minnie) Dickfos – which connection would explain the use of the barn for German Baptist worship. This barn was used for worship meetings until the construction of the Coleyville Baptist Church in 1868. (George Thorn had donated one acre of his land for the German Baptists to have a church and cemetery on 23 April 1867). Minnie's brother Carl Dickfos was a well-known lay preacher in the area over many years. He also assisted in the construction of the Coleyville church building in 1868 and the new larger building built further up the road in 1909.

Carl Dickfos married Christine Schneider on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1871 at the residence of Baptist Minister T.S. Gerard in West Street, Ipswich. The Schneider family were also prominent in the German Baptist Churches of the Fassifern Valley. Christine's father, Johann Georg Schneider, was the first pastor of the Baptist church in the Mount Walker area. The 'Queenslander' newspaper of 17 June 1871 reports his being "unanimously called by the Associated Churches of the German Baptist persuasion" to pastor the German families – a role which he carried on until his death in 1879, often riding many miles on horseback to minister to his flock.

The Schneider family was also significant in the establishment of the Boonah Baptist Church. Fred Schneider (son of Johann Georg Schneider) took up land at Hoya (near Boonah) after his marriage to Caroline Dickfos in 1871. The first Baptist church meetings here took place under a mulberry tree on their property. Later they helped build a small church building just outside their property on land apparently donated by them, and later still the church relocated to a larger building in Church Street, Boonah.

While some of the smaller churches, such as Coleyville, have now closed; the legacy of these pioneering German families and their strong faith in establishing a vibrant Baptist community in this area still continues. Only in glory will the full results of this witness in bringing souls to the Lord be known!



Top left: The JG Schneider grave rededication service  
Above: The site of the grave in the paddock

## William Moore

By R W (Bill) Hughes

Archives researcher, Bill Hughes, has completed his extensive research on early Brisbane pastor, William Moore and published it in a book called, "*The Gardener" Pastor William Moore 1826-1906*". It is available in hard copy and as an e-book from Xlibris <http://bookstore.xlibris.com/> Here is a slightly edited extract from the opening of the book which contains detailed and fascinating information about this key Baptist pioneer.

William Moore (1826-1906) was the founder and first pastor of the Petrie Terrace Baptist Church. He also established and was the first pastor of the Rosalie Baptist Church and was involved in developing a number of churches around and beyond Brisbane. For many years he refused to accept a stipend and lived off his own earnings as a market gardener. He and his wife Margaret had eight children, three of whom did not survive childhood. One of his sons was Dr William Moore who became a noted surgeon in Melbourne. Two other sons were prominent in local government. In 1883 Pastor Moore was President of the Queensland Baptist Association, of which he was one of the founding fathers. He was greatly admired and loved by many of his contemporaries.

However, at first there seemed to be little hope for him. He was born in an isolated village in rural England to poor, uneducated parents and raised in poverty, totally dependent on his masters for the necessities of life. The possibility of people like him lifting themselves out of their lowly status was virtually non-existent. People like him just didn't rate. Better to use them to do the menial tasks while they were physically able and then let them fend for themselves as best they could. His birthplace was a small village among the sand hills on the west coast of England and he was destined to remain there for the duration of his life.

But there was something in William's make-up that made him special. He had a burning ambition to better himself. He wanted to learn and develop his skills. And he had a fierce desire to beat the odds and

rise above his humble beginnings and make something worthwhile of his life.

**Berrow** is a small seaside village in the Sedgemoor district of Somerset, England, around 30 miles from the city of Bristol and 126 miles west of London. In the early nineteenth

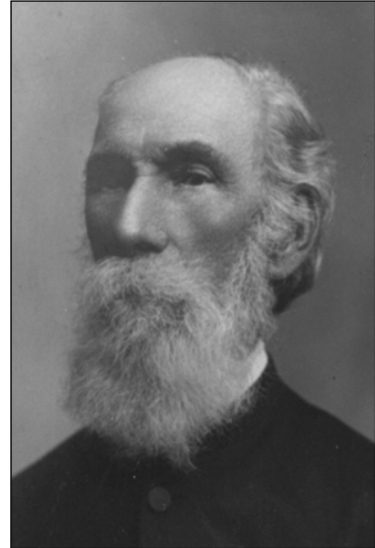
century the village was quite isolated and difficult to get to except via the Brent Road, which required walking for the last mile due to deep sand. Between the village and the beach was a wide natural barrier of very high and extensive sand hills where a multitude of rabbits lived.

A Parliamentary inquiry conducted in 1818 found that the poorer classes in the village, which had a population of 496 people (251 male and 245 female) and 99 families, were entirely without any means of education. By 1835 the situation had improved and there were 44 children in three daily schools who also attended a Sunday school provided by the Curate of the parish church. A further 12 children attended a daily school and a Sunday school run by the Wesleyan Methodist chapel.

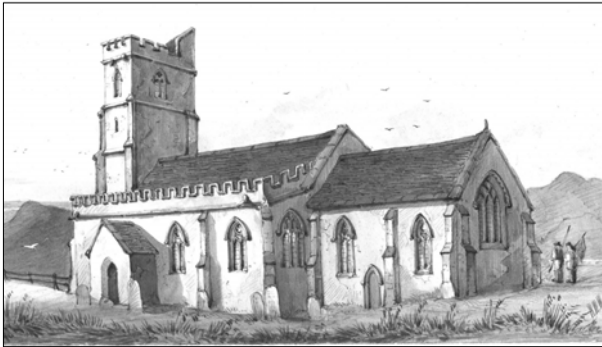
According to the 1831 Census, of the 99 families in Berrow, 50 mainly derived their income from agriculture, 22 from trade, manufacture or handicraft and 27 from other employment. There were 116 men over the age of 20 of whom 56 were labourers, 24 were involved in trade or handicrafts and 14 in unspecified work. Some of these were probably fishermen. A further 20 males were farmers, 16 of whom employed labourers.

The existence of a Wesleyan Methodist chapel in a small village such as Berrow was unusual, but construction of the chapel began in 1813 by members of the Banwell Methodist Circuit. The chapel was replaced by a new chapel which opened in 1850.

William Moore was born in Berrow on 7 February 1826, the son of Edward Moore (age 66 or 67) and Frances (Fanny) Pople (age 38), and was christened in St Marys, the Berrow Parish Church on



Cottages on the site of the former Berrow Chapel



**St Mary's Parish Church, Berrow.** This image is used with the kind permission of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society. With acknowledgment also of the South West Heritage Trust (UK) which arranged approval for the use of the image. The original image is held at the Somerset Heritage Centre.

12 March 1826. His parents worked on a local dairy farm. At the time of William's birth, his father was a farm labourer and his mother was a housemaid.

William's father, Edward Moore, born about 1759, was the son of William Moore and Mary Fry. His family had lived in Somerset for many generations. He is known to have had three brothers and one sister – William, James, John and Anne Moore. William died around 1840 but the other three were deceased at the time of the birth of Edward's son. Edward also had two nephews, both sons of his older brother William.

Edward Moore was first married to Dorothy Norvell in 1782. A son Thomas was born to the couple in 1783. In 1791 Edward married a second time to a widow, Tryphena West, but no record can be found of any children of this marriage. William's mother Frances was Edward's third wife. They were married in Berrow on 2 April 1825. Frances, *nee* Pople, was a house servant and a single mother when she married Edward Moore. She had given birth to twins eighteen months before their marriage. Her twins, Mary and Joseph Pople were baptised at



**The present Counterslip Baptist Church where Wm Moore gained valuable experience in ministry that he later put into practice in Brisbane.**

Berrow on 5 October 1823. Mary only lived for three months.

A primitive and under resourced education system operated in Berrow during William's childhood. He would have received some basic education from one of the daily schools and a Sunday school provided by the parish church. Until he was twelve years old he lived with his parents and half-brother in a rented house, which also included an outbuilding and a garden.

In the 1800s there was no refrigeration of food, which meant that the family's vegetable garden was its source of fresh food. In Victorian England all of the family members were expected to work in their gardens and become experienced at gardening at a young age and William was no exception. He soon learned the importance of the family garden to their survival. And because of this, gardening was an important profession and a good gardener was much sought after by the upper classes.

*The Dictionary of Daily Wants* of 1858 makes the following comments:

He who undertakes the profession of a gardener takes upon himself a work of some importance, and which requires no small degree of knowledge, ingenuity and exertion to perform well. There are few businesses which may not be learned in much less time than that of a gardener may possibly be.... A man cannot be a good gardener unless he be thoughtful, steady and industrious, possessing a superior degree of sobriety and moral excellence, as well as genius, and knowledge adapted to his business.

William's father died in 1838 at the age of about 79, when William was twelve years old. It seems that when William's father died, he, his mother and step brother Joseph continued their employment on local farms and this would have enabled him to maintain contact with close members of his mother's and father's families. However, in this early period of his life he was apparently subjected to much deprivation, sadness and struggle. In later years he spoke little about this time in his life. He merely admitted to friends and colleagues that these early years in Somerset "were passed amidst many difficulties".

However, at about fifteen years of age William left his home and family in Berrow and set off for the city of Bristol with the aim of improving his lot in life. It seems likely that his aim in moving to Bristol was to further his education through the education program run by the nonconformists there. This is supported by the fact that on arrival there he initially went to the Congregationalist church through which he was able to become connected with the non-conformist movement.

## ***Highfields: its early life—the short story***

***By David Parker***

Highfields was the earliest of many outstations of the main Toowoomba church, and dates from only 1 or 2 years after the town church was established in 1875. It was a rural area, also known by the name Koojarewon, which was first settled by German and English farmers and timber getters.

The district, which is located on the edge of the main range about 12 kms north of Toowoomba, was described at the time of its first settlement as idyllic. For example, a child's letter published in a newspaper in 1900 talks about it as healthy, scenic and with soil so fertile almost anything could be grown, and many different kinds of birds and animals in the dense bush. The German wagons were a familiar sight, often taking produce to the nearby Spring Bluff railway station, which is now so famous for its gardens.

Settlement dates from the 1860s, boosted by the completion of the railway in 1867, and later a school and other facilities, including Lutheran and Anglican churches. It now has a population approaching 10,000 and has become a suburban area with its own community life as well as serving as a dormitory suburb of Toowoomba.

Highfields Baptist is a church with a complex history and also several distinct phases to its life, with at least early and current period, with perhaps a middle one as well. This article only covers the first part.

The first reference to Baptist witness in the area was the baptism of August Howe on 3 July 1877 at nearby Meringandan by Rev. John MacPherson, the energetic (if later controversial) pastor of Toowoomba. The first burials in the church's own cemetery (one of only a few such cemeteries in Queensland) date from 1877 and 1878. So promising was the work of this outstation at the first that a building was erected in 1878 in Kuhl's Road, on land donated by Mr Hartwig. At a cost of £150 and seating 100, it was the first specially erected Baptist building on the Darling Downs – the Toowoomba church was at that time meeting in a converted cottage already existing on its Herries Street property.

Blessing continued and only a year later, on 19 Oct 1879, the new fellowship separated from Toowoomba and was constituted as a separate church with 13 members, two deacons, although Rev John McPherson served also as its pastor.

A weekly communion service was conducted and services were held monthly during the week. There was an active Sunday School. Soon there were more baptisms and the church grew steadily.

Over these formative years there were many other special activities, such as anniversaries of the formation of the church, visiting preachers from Brisbane and from even further afield – the best known was Thomas Spurgeon, son of the famous London preacher. The building was used by other

denominations such as the Church of England and the Salvation Army (although its use by these groups was withdrawn later on doctrinal grounds! There were visits from Baptist missionaries telling of their work in Bengal. The picturesque location of the church made it a favourite spot for picnic outings when the Baptist Association (later Union) of Queensland held its half-yearly assemblies in Toowoomba.

John MacPherson's pastorate in Toowoomba ended early in 1880 with some tension and conflict. It is not known how much these problems spilled over into Highfields, but it was left without a pastor. However, he was warmly welcomed when he visited the church in later years.

MacPherson's successor at the Toowoomba church was Rev. William Higlett, who had come from England where he was pastor of Cheam Baptist Church. Higlett had trained at Spurgeon's Pastors' College and the invitation to migrate to Toowoomba was received through Spurgeon who strongly recommended him. Higlett arrived in mid-1882, and soon took over pastoral responsibilities for Highfields as well.

In fact, Higlett showed a lot of interest in the outstations and there were reports of the rejuvenation of the work at Highfields with extra gatherings for worship and fellowship, and some roll revision. Highfields funded outreach to Merritt's Creek. After a few years the building at Highfields was enlarged by 10 feet with 4 extra pews. There were more repairs carried out a year later.

When Higlett moved to Albion in 1890, he left the work in Toowoomba and district in a healthy state, but the 1890s was a hard time for the area and the churches due to the economic downturn, industrial unsettlement and later droughts which plagued this decade. Rev Ezekiel Barnett, a gifted Welsh pastor with experience in New Zealand and NSW, arrived in January 1891 as a replacement, but he was dogged by ill-health.

Highfields was not prospering. By the end of 1891 it was not strong enough to sustain itself, so it joined the Toowoomba church as an outstation. There was a unified members' roll, and funds raised at Highfields surplus to its needs were transferred to the central church's account.

This arrangement proved beneficial and within a year or so, there was enough support for the youth to fund the purchase of an organ for Highfields and the building was often crowded due to increases in the attendance at services. A tea meeting early 1892 for the anniversary of the opening of the building attracted 80 people. There were fortnightly services with monthly weeknight evening meetings. Pastor Barnett was encouraged about the value of ministry in the country areas when he reported a conversion after one of the regular evening prayer meetings. The growth was so strong that Highfields again became

an independent church and was successful application to become a member of the Baptist Association of Queensland in 1894.

However, Mr Barnett's health had given way and he had to relinquish the pastorate at Toowoomba in 1894. Instead of moving completely away from the Darling Downs, he moved to Highfields where he offered to become the first resident pastor of Highfields. However, he was on no regular stipend, receiving only surplus funds from the church. His wife had to do piano teaching to help out with their finances. Therefore, he and his wife and two children lived in extremely difficult conditions for the three years that he sacrificially served in this way, prompting the well-known minister of the City Tabernacle, Rev. Wm Whale to organise a financial appeal to assist them.

Even though it was a difficult time, Barnett was a popular pastor and gave good leadership to the church over the 2 1/2 years he was there in this capacity. The services were well supported, membership was around 20, and there were some baptisms, a Band of Hope and a strong youth Temperance group. Kate Allanby, a missionary in India from Windsor Road church visited in 1895, and help given to the Gowrie Baptist fellowship in carrying out some building repairs. Rev. William Whale preached there and the members of the half-yearly assembly of the Baptist Union meeting in Toowoomba visited there for their customary picnic.

Despite his sacrifice and ill health, there were those at Highfields who did not appreciate Barnett. This situation came to a head in an incident when there was sharp tension with one of the deacons. This led to a downturn in Barnett's health and he resigned at the beginning of 1897. It was a wise move, because Mr Barnett recovered and lived for more than 25 years, serving at Mount Morgan, Lanefield, and an extended and distinguished time at Nundah, during which he served terms as both President and Secretary of the Baptist Association.

With Barnett's departure the church faced the prospect of being without a pastor and having to rejoin Toowoomba. However, an approach was made to the minister at Toowoomba, Rev John Glover, another Spurgeon's college man. Now in his late 50s, Glover who had arrived in Queensland in 1885, had served well at Fortescue Street (since closed) and Rockhampton before coming to Toowoomba in 1894.

He agreed to conduct services on Sunday afternoons from the beginning of 1897 as a separate responsibility in addition to his other pastoral duties and received financial support for so doing. In this way, the Highfields church managed to maintain its independence for a while longer. There were good anniversaries held in 1898 and 1899, with the founding pastor, John McPherson present to give a 'spicy' address at a 3 hour long concert program during the week. Another former pastor, William Higlett also visited in 1899. Membership remained steady around 20 but the Band of Hope had failed.

The church was to suffer another pastoral loss when Glover's health deteriorated. The situation was made more difficult when he had a bad fall on the steep track to the Spring Bluff railway station

assisting a friend with very heavy luggage. In mid-1899, Glover had to resign and moved to Rosewood. But in a curious repetition of the preceding pastorate by Barrett, Glover would be back in a few years, although his health would still be critical.

The difficulties of the 1890s and John Glover's poor health had led to a run down of the Toowoomba church (and also of Highfields). The Baptist Association became concerned about the Baptist witness in the area, and decided to take urgent action through its Home Mission by appointing someone to try to lead the church in this important town, the capital of the Darling Downs, back to growth

Rev. A G Weller, who had been a successful pastor and evangelist in other parts of the state since arriving from England in 1887 and training with Rev. Wm Whale at the City Tabernacle, was given the role. He arrived in the district in February 1900. This signalled a new era for the Toowoomba church, which enlarged its membership by more than 300 per cent during his lengthy ministry. He had also been requested to revive the work at Highfields, but it was not going to be so straightforward for this church which had already seen such a complicated history in its first 25 years of life.

To reinforce the plan, the Baptist Association of Queensland held its half yearly meeting again at Toowoomba. This time the delegates at their customary picnic at Highfields were photographed, giving the first image of the church building. The weather that day, 14 April, was described as 'simply perfection' as the 30 or so delegates travelled in their 'buggies and vehicles of various descriptions for a delightful drive' to Highfields where tea was 'enjoyed in *al fresco* style in the garden of Mr H Thies.' At the meeting, chaired by Mr S. Grimes, MLA, there was lots of solos and singing of Sankey's hymns, and several addresses on topics such as Christian growth, loyalty and baptism. After the conclusion of 'the happiest meeting known in Highfields', the participants drove back to Toowoomba 'enjoying the bright moonlight' on the way.

The revival of work at Highfields was on a low key with fortnightly services, but after some time, those services had ceased, leaving the church closed. However, by mid-1903 Rev John Glover, who had moved away from the area about four years earlier, returned to the district in poor health. Despite his condition, he was soon taking services for other denominations, and offered to help the Baptists by taking a service for them as well. His offer was enthusiastically accepted and led to the re-opening of the church, and a brief revival in its life.

The annual tea meeting in 1904 was held on Easter Monday. It was reported as 'the most successful of the kind yet held in the church' with an overflow crowd of more than 200 attending for the meal and concert program. Mr Glover spoke about his experiences since leaving the area.

But this renewal did not last long. Mr Glover's illness became more serious and he died on 3 January 1906 at the age of 65 years, leaving a wife and 3 sons 4 daughters in very poor circumstances. He was remembered as a good pastor, possessed of 'genial,

broad sympathies and earnest evangelistic teaching’.

His death was a big blow to the church which closed down again. However, the Baptist Home Mission was anxious for the work in the area to be put on a good foundation, so in early 1907, it requested Rev. A G Weller to open it again as a mission station. To meet this need, and to provide leaders for other outstations, Weller commenced a Preachers’ Society.

The initiative proved effective for Highfields - the secretary of the Home Mission, former Toowoomba pastor, Rev. Wm Higlett who visited late in 1907 reported good prospects. Lay preachers were conducting weekly services, the Sunday School and youth work had picked up, visiting missionaries such as Miss Martha Plested and Rev. J. Ings were welcomed warmly, backed up by regular financial gifts.

The revival even affected the building which was now more than 25 years old; during the time it was closed, it was eaten out by white ants. So now it was completely re-built and moved to a better position on the block at a cost of £36. The cemetery was also renovated, and the deeds of the property were placed with the Baptist Association.

The momentum was maintained when in 1909 the Home Mission announced a ‘Forward Movement’ and asked passionately, ‘When is Highfields to become a centre for work instead of a preaching station?’ However, this challenge would not be answered for many years. In mid-1913, Rev AG Weller concluded his pastorate at Toowoomba and moved to Nundah, leaving Highfields to continue on as an outstation of Toowoomba with minimal services and activities.

During the succeeding years, services were maintained at Highfields by lay preachers fortnightly

or perhaps only monthly. During the time of World War I, there was difficulty with transportation. After the war, efforts were made to secure the help of student pastors, but this was not possible. Sunday school and youth work was maintained, with the Band of Hope being in operation again for a period. The work amongst ladies also continued at various levels, as did missionary interest.

There were occasional high points, such as the Baptist Association half yearly assembly picnic taking place again in 1914. The church took its part with other Baptists of the area in trying to get work started at Harlaxton in 1914, but this effort was unsuccessful. In 1921, the Baptist Association ‘Forward Movement’ saw evangelist Thomas McColl in the area.

Very little information is available about the church during the period of the 1920-1950 but it seems that it barely continued to operate. In the 1950s there was some renewed interest. A group of young people of the Christian Endeavour Society at the Toowoomba church, including Max Vines, visited the church to inject new life into it, although it was not as responsive as some of the other outstations. This effort was backed up by the pastors, Rev Max Howard, then Rev J Wilbur Fletcher and Rev John Knights who conducted monthly afternoon services.

However, it was to be another twenty years before there would be lasting turn around in the life of this church. New development in the community as settlement increased and Highfields grew to be an important centre on the northern outskirts of Toowoomba was the key which enabled the Baptist fellowship to blossom once again.

*(Continued from page 1) Annual Report*

Archives. This scanner is now being used extensively as the digitisation of the Archives photographic collection is well underway. It is expected that other materials will be digitised in the future as part of the QB transition to digital archiving gathers pace. It is also expected that the scanning of *qb* magazines and BUQ Yearbooks/reports will be finalised in due course.

The research and publication work of the Society has been quiet this year with work proceeding slowly on the Darling Downs history. However, Bill Hughes has completed his work on the pioneer pastor, Rev William Moore and published it in hard copy and e-book through Xlibris under the title, “‘The Gardener’ Pastor William Moore 1826-1906”. He has also produced a history of the City Tabernacle organ and choir.

*QB Forum* has been published regularly with various articles of history and information, and our column has appeared regularly in the *qb magazine*. There have been some changes to the website, which also has links from the QB website; the BHQ pages are made available as part of the site of one of the members. It is expected that there will be a gradual shift to providing *Forum* in electronic form for those who request it.

For the first time in many years, BHQ did not mount a display at the annual QB Business Day/Convention because of inconvenient arrangements. It had been noted in recent years that there was very little time for delegates to inspect displays due to the brevity of the Business Day program, and in some cases, the displays were located remote from the business session thereby adding to the problem. Instead this year, books and a promotional poster were placed in delegates’ bags, with an unknown response!

Some investigations have been carried out during the year in regard to placement of historical plaques marking key Baptist buildings in the Brisbane CBD area, but it is proving difficult to make any progress.

Since the Secretary’s role passed to me, my work has, in addition to the normal secretarial tasks, involved a degree of consolidation in terms of address lists and processes. Notices of meetings etc are now being emailed to all those who have provided email addresses with just a small number (around six) continuing to be sent by mail. I understand that documents relating to his role as Secretary and Treasurer are still coming to light. I will not be continuing in this role but I do hope that this work will be of assistance to the incoming Secretary.

**Dr Anne Klose**