



# The Queensland Baptist Forum

The Journal of Baptist Heritage Queensland

No. 96 April 2017

## ***Baptist Heritage—News and Notes***

'All the Way' biographical series

We commence a new occasional series in this issue, called '**All the Way**' - featuring life stories of Queensland Baptists. We are looking for contributions. Can you write up your own story, or encourage someone else to do theirs? Another possibility—you could write up the story of someone who has been a leader and inspiration to others? See page 2 for more details.

### **Brochure**

This year we have printed a colour brochure for inclusion in the delegates' packs at the QB Convention. It contains basic information about Baptist Heritage and the Archives. Check it out. Extra copies are available on request and for distribution elsewhere.

### **Heritage Plaques Project**

Last year the Heritage Plaques project was rejuvenated when a plaque was placed on Toowong, the oldest existing Baptist Church building still in use as a church. We have now placed an order for a similar plaque for the City Tabernacle—watch for details of its opening. We have also begun negotiations with Windsor Road for a plaque on their structure as well. We welcome contact from other churches, in the Brisbane area and anywhere in the state, who would like to participate.

### **On-line Album of Baptist Church buildings in Queensland**

An album of images of Baptist church buildings in Queensland dating from the 1851 has been on line for many years. Now it has been corrected, expanded and updated to 1955, covering the first century of Baptist witness in Queensland. There are about 140 churches shown, now listed in order of date of opening. There are some churches for which no photo is currently available, and no doubt, there are some churches completely missing because we do not have any information (or photo) to document their erection and opening. Check out the album at <http://bit.do/qb-churches> Further photos, information and corrections welcome - please contact Baptist

**BHQ—Meetings 2017: June 10; 28 October (AGM) 2pm @The Baptist Archives**

<p><b><i>Baptist Heritage Queensland</i></b> (est. 1984)</p> <p><b>Membership (2017)</b> Individual \$10 pa Family \$15 pa Corporate \$20 pa <i>Qld Baptist Forum</i> 3 issues pa Free to Members Others \$2 each posted</p> <p><b>President:</b> Mr Eric W. Kopittke 98 Yallambee Rd., Jindalee 4074 Ph 3376 4339 <a href="mailto:kopittke@tpg.com.au">kopittke@tpg.com.au</a></p> <p><b>Secretary:</b> Bill Hughes, 7 Dalziel St., Nundah 4012 Ph 3256 8897 Mob 0409 915 685 <a href="mailto:roslynbill@bigpond.com">roslynbill@bigpond.com</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://dparker.net.au/bhsq.htm">http://dparker.net.au/bhsq.htm</a> Archives contact: <a href="mailto:archives@qb.org.au">archives@qb.org.au</a> Ph 3354 5642 (leave message)</p>	<p><b>CONTENTS</b></p> <p><b><i>Qld Baptist Forum</i></b></p> <p><b><i>No 96 April 2017</i></b></p> <p>News and notes p 1</p> <p>'All the Way' - Rev Ken Steer p 2</p> <p>'All the Way' - Rev Dr Stan Solomon p 5</p> <p>Pastoring in the 'Good Old Days'! Rev HL McIntyre—Lanefield/Marburg p 8</p>
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## All the Way!

We commence a new occasional series featuring the life stories of Queensland Baptists. In this series we invite people to tell their personal, family and ministry lives, highlighting aspects of the spiritual growth, development and service for the interest of our readers and to be stored in our Archives as a permanent record.

We thank the first two contributors—Rev Ken Steer and Rev Dr Stan Solomon.

Ken's account is specially written, while Stan's is just the opening section (slightly adapted) of a very much longer autobiography that he has recently made available to those interested (more of this will follow next issue) We thank them both for their kindness.

We invite contributions to this series, either as autobiographies or as family histories, or as biographies of people who have exercised an influential ministry and been commendable examples and mentors. Contact BHQ for details



*It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.*

(Phil 2:13)

It is the year 2017 and reflecting back over 78 years I am very conscious of how God has worked in my life. So I will try to put 78 years into some 2500 words and it will be not so much 'My Story' but rather 'His Story in my life.

I was about ten years of age. We were attending Nundah Baptist Church, and Rev. Sam Lane came to visit our home. I began to exit the room to allow the adults to talk but the Pastor insisted that I stay. He prayed and mentioned me in his prayer. This amazed me as I had been told that children should be seen and not heard and it was even better if they were not seen. Now I was being prayed for and I was significant and had worth.

At age 12 years I attended a Boys Camp at Currumbin on the Gold Coast where the Baptist Union had a camp site. It was there that God awakened within me a need of His presence in my life and I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour. Many years later I was to come back and lead a number of camps not only at Currumbin but also at the Toowoomba Camp site, and still later on Magnetic Island and at Hervey Bay.

By the time I was 16 years I was baptized and began Sunday School Teaching, had become an NCO in the Boys' Brigade and Secretary of a Christian Endeavour Group. After two years as Secretary I thought I should try to get more members for our Intermediate Endeavour Group and where better to go recruiting than at the Junior Endeavour Group. The Intermediates met on Sunday afternoon and the Juniors met on

Sunday morning during Church Service time. So one Sunday morning I turned up to look for recruits and Rosa Shaw who was the Superintendent recruited me by saying, 'We have been praying for a man to take over the role of Junior Superintendent.' Now years later it brings me great joy to see some of the juniors from Boys' Brigade and Endeavour having served in Ministry, Rev John Lane, Rev Graeme Rouillon, Rev John Tanner, Rev Graham Wiseman, Rev Keith Cameron-Smith. Don Smith and I worked very closely together at 10<sup>th</sup> Brisbane Boys' Brigade Company and after I left to enter Theological College he eventually became Captain of the Company and is still active in Brigade planning to this day.

How could I tell the difference between God's call and my desires? I wanted to be certain that it was God calling me to Theological College not just my idea. I asked a Senior Deacon and he said, 'Don't be in a hurry, get experience in the world first.' Another Deacon said, 'Get into College as soon as you can while you are young and able to study'. I thought, 'I'm asking the wrong people.'

So I prayed to God saying, 'I'm teaching a class of Boys in Sunday School and in leadership in Boys' Brigade, if you want me to go to Theological College give me the opportunity to speak to girls.' A week later the Girls' Brigade Captain came to me and asked me to take devotions one night with the girls. After the first night I was asked to speak on a further two occasions. I said to God, 'You convinced me on the first occasion, there was no need to make it three times?' In later ministry when uncertainties happened that three-fold confirmation helped.

So in 1959 I faced up to a group of men who interviewed me with regard to my application for College and they said, 'you have not done enough preaching, go away and when you have more experience come back again.' With the certainty that God was calling me I was not deterred. I visited Rev Vic Bowring, the Home Mission Superintendent, and was soon preaching regularly in Home Mission Churches around Brisbane.

I can remember hearing a conversation between Principal Morling (NSW) and Principal Warriner (Qld) and a statement made was, 'Who are we to put an Educational Standard between a man and his call to the ministry?' We were pushed and encouraged to our limits to get the highest qualifications possible, but when it was obvious that we were struggling then mercy prevailed. In my final year Rev. Dr. E. G. Gibson

(College Principal) wrote to me saying, 'Mr. Steer, you have constantly struggled with Greek during your college course, how about substituting it for something more beneficial like Pastoral Theology.'

It was towards the end of August 1961 that I got the courage to ask Gwen Covill out to meet my parents. She was doing a Deaconess Course and was the only girl among all of the male students.



When it became obvious that we were 'holding hands' the other full time students were constantly trying to organize circumstances so that we could be together. We tried desperately not to be seen in public together lest people got 'wrong ideas'. The inevitable happened and some very hurtful things were said to us. This experience gave us the message of why some people leave the Church because they have been 'hurt'. God was calling us to serve Him so we were able to survive the hurt.

Some years later when we were trying to organize our wedding we needed the permission of the Baptist Union authorities as the agreement was that I had to finish my second year of studies. I had written a letter which went to the Union Executive. When I telephoned the General Superintendent (Rev Frank Stone) to find out if our request had been approved, he said, 'I can't give you an answer because it has to go to the Union Council in a weeks time, but you have nothing to worry about.' I said to myself, 'Thank you God for understanding leadership.'

After our marriage Gwen told me that during that first year in College she had been in the common room reading notices on the notice board and she had heard an audible voice say, 'What about Ken,' She turned around but no one else was present. I felt deflated that I was so insignificant that God had to bring me to Gwen's attention.

Moving from being a full time student, I became Assistant Pastor to Rev John Knights at Toowoomba where I was given the responsibility of the work at South Toowoomba. This was a Home Mission appointment and during my third year I was asked if I would like a move and I replied that after my fourth year would be acceptable. Gwen and I began to pray about where we would like to move and independently of one another we came to the conclusion that Innisfail would be nice. During my fourth year Rev Vic Bowring came and said, 'How would you like to go to Innisfail?' That was a threefold confirmation.

There was a lot of Military activity in the Innisfail/Tully area and a need for a Military Chap-

lain. I was asked if I would become a Chaplain (Citizen Military Force) on loan to the Regular Army three days a week. I did not realize it then but this was God opening up the way for me to be involved at a later date in a larger Defense Force work in Central Queensland.

From Innisfail we moved to Gympie. In my fourth year at Gympie, Rev Norm Mergard approached me during the Annual Assembly and said, 'There is a position as House Parents becoming available in the Family Group Home at Rockhampton, you should consider it.' This was God preparing me for what lay ahead. The following month the Church meeting did not renew my call to the Pastorate. That hurt a bit, but we could see that God was directing us to a new Ministry in caring for children. Up to that time we had our own two children and seven others for various times.

We spent nearly four years as House Parents, but had to move on from that task because of pressures on our own two children. As a House Parent I was still able to do some casual and part time work so that the home could be as close as possible to a normal home. Rev Maurie Olsen asked me to become his assistant at the Baptist Tabernacle, so that whenever he was away or needed help I was available.

The Military Chaplaincy work opened up again because there were five High Schools in Rockhampton with Military Cadets along with Cadets at Mackay, Gladstone, Biloela and Blackwater, also Ambulance and Signals Companies along with the Headquarters of 42<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Australian Regiment. We also had a Regular Army Company that looked after the Shoalwater Bay Training Area. I was away regularly at courses and exercises and nearly every week end at something Army related. The Baptist Tabernacle listed me as Associate Pastor (responsible to Aust. Defence Force). I became Chaplain to the local Royal Australian Navy Cadets at Training Ship Rockhampton.

At the conclusion of our time as House Parent I needed an income so I became Janitor Groundsman at a local Primary School. We bought an old Queensland house and began renovating so that we had room for six children, four of whom had been with us previously. Working at the School I was able to do Religious Education and found myself doing funerals and weddings for staff.

Rev Ray Euston asked me to accept the work of Prison Chaplain at Etna Creek (now called Central Qld Correctional Centre). I accepted this but could only do it for two years as my health was beginning to suffer.

I was on the Rockhampton Tabernacle Pastoral Team, Manager of the Living Word Book Store which was open five days a week, Boys' Brigade Officer, Leader of a Home Group, Husband and father while renovating an old house.

It was during this time I was diagnosed as having unstable angina and spent three months off work. During that time I spent days in hospital and ICU. After stress tests I was about to be sent to Prince Charles Hospital with the possibility of heart surgery.



Ken & Gwen Steer, 1972,  
when Ken was with 3 Task  
Force NQ Area

On 6<sup>th</sup> August 1992 Rev Chris Burrigge and the Deacons came and fulfilled the instructions of James Chapter 5: 13-16. Following this I entered Prince Charles Hospital on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August and two days later walked out unaided then on the Friday we were able to go to the Brisbane Show and walk around without difficulty. The angiogram showed no artery blockage or heart trouble. God is healer.

It was about this time that the last of our children got married and moved, so we decided that with our large house we could take in University Student Boarders. We had up to four at a time and over a period of time about eight stayed with us.

November 1996 the Army said it was time for me to retire and in March of that year (God's timing) I received a letter from Rev Ed Kingston saying, 'I am of the opinion that you both have the types of personalities that would cope with the peculiarities of life in the bush.' This resulted in us going (self supporting) to Kalkaringi in the Northern Territory for 1997 with the Australian Baptist Missionary Society.

I had hoped that I would receive a call to some other Pastoral ministry but God wanted me back in Rockhampton where I found a major difficulty that needed resolving. Following this I said to Gwen that we had been able to do twelve months self funded in the Northern Territory and our bank balance was still the same, I could retire and we could become 'Grey Nomads.'

We set about preparing to sell our house and it sold three months before we wanted it to, again we saw God's provision when a two bedroom unit became available just around the corner. Gwen's mother was living with us at this time. Then in 2002 we moved to Brisbane to live in Gwen's mother's unit to care for her. Gwen's mum died in 2005 and we planned to sell the unit after we had a holiday but a buyer turned up before we even had an opportunity to advertise. God wanted us to move in a hurry.

I met Rev Stephen Thomas at the Baptist Assembly in 2005 and I asked him about the price of houses in Woodford. His reply was 'I've got just the place for you.' He had just moved into Woodford to plant a church and the Baptist Union had an option to buy the local picture theatre. At the rear of the theatre was a two bedroom Unit. We moved to Woodford and after many working bees and help from Mobile Mission Maintenance, twelve months later in March 2007 the building was ready for use.

God is still providing because just one hundred meters up the road Embracia Aged Care Home began

to be built in 2013 at the same time as my wife was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. At the beginning of 2015 Gwen was diagnosed as low care and with help I was able to continue caring for her. By the end of 2015 it was obvious that dementia had set in and she was now high care. I needed help so asked one of the ladies from our congregation who is an ex nurse to accompany us to the local medical centre. The doctor instructed us to present ourselves at the Accident and Emergency first thing the next morning and tell them I couldn't cope. Exactly a week later Gwen was admitted to Embracia at Woodford. People have asked me how I was able to get Gwen into an Aged Care Home so quickly. My answer is that God prepares the way.

An unexpected event happened just after Gwen had been admitted to the Care Home in December 2015. I found that breakfast time was when I felt most 'alone'. After breakfast it was time for regular Bible reading and prayer. I rested my head in my hands on the table and wept. Instantly I found that I was standing behind myself, looking down at my body that appeared to be worn out. I was alert, well, whole and surrounded by light. I reached out and touched myself on the right shoulder and suddenly my flesh and spirit became one again.



Ken Steer with Colin Chandler, Baptist  
Union of Qld, at Woodford property

I struggle to explain and understand what happened but later as I read Hebrews 1:11-12 'They will perish, but you remain; they will wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end'. That body that I had looked down upon had appeared to be a worn out garment and for a short time I had been changed.

Every morning I am able to walk the one hundred meters to have a cup of tea with Gwen while she has breakfast. If she has a fall the Home rings me and I can be there within minutes. I conduct a Church Service there each month.

Throughout the whole of our married life we have seen God going before us and preparing the way. I am confident that will continue for however many years we have left and even beyond the years we have left on this earth because Jesus said, 'I go to prepare a place for you' John 14:2 and that place must be magnificent.

## 'A Man Called of God' - Rev Stan Solomon

This is the first part of the Rev Dr Stan Solomon's autobiography which he has kindly given permission for publication (it has been only slightly adapted). A further episode will be published in a later edition of *QB Forum*



A man called of God – a simple man – a man of little strength and of even less noble character—he is Stan Solomon.

I am a 'now' person and always have been. I have never kept a journal. So the dates and times in what follows will always be approximate and subject to a

flawed memory. Nevertheless, after denying for years any inclination to set down a history of my life, I believe God is now asking me to do so. Why, I cannot imagine. But here goes.

First – why do I title this history as 'a man called of God'?

It seems presumptuous and if I did not believe emphatically that it is true, it would be. I believe God made a promise to my parents regarding me and He has faithfully kept that promise through the 83 years since then, even despite my many self-willed by-path wanderings.

As a part Jewish boy I was circumcised I believe on the eighth day, and shortly thereafter offered to God for 'the ministry' on the penitent form at the Albion, Brisbane, Salvation Army hall. I remained completely unaware of this till the day I rang my father at age 33 and told him I believed I was called to the ministry and was embarking on that course of action. God who promises is faithful!

Also, the verses God gave me on applying for the ministry were Jeremiah 1:5a 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart', and Acts 13:2 'While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them"'. I have over these 50 years come to consider myself a mini-Jeremiah, however small and insignificant by comparison, speaking the Word of God into the lives of people through the Baptist denomination.

The rest of this story will record the faithfulness of God to His promises in the fulfilment of His call.

### CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

#### Preservation

As a child I was skinny, weak and sickly – susceptible to any infection around. I was born with an inwardly turned right foot which enforced wearing special boots for some years. This made me a poor athlete, very self-conscious, somewhat fearful and certainly not venturesome. Even so, I seemed to get into possible dangerous situations, through which in hindsight I perceive God preserved me.

At about 18 months I climbed on to the veranda rail and fell a couple of metres on my head. Some unkind folks would say they now understand what's been wrong with me all these years. But it was God who preserved me. At 2 or 3 years of age I fell into a deep part of a dirty Kedron Brook only to be pulled out by my hair by my father as I surfaced.

At age 6 I went after school with a friend to see his big brother who worked at the abattoir. Needless to say we were well after 7pm and in the dark before we were found by the district search parties.

In later primary school I regularly missed school through illness, once for several weeks with a very serious complaint which doctors seemed unable to diagnose. Later, in adolescence through taking up tennis and cricket (a very ordinary but enthusiastic player) I regained a measure of good health. God is good.

Then in teenage years someone gave me an old bike which I repaired. So when I thought I'd fixed it, I took it out on the road for a try-out. Without thinking I turned down the steep hill in front of the church only to realise half-way down that I had not done any brakes. A stop sign at the bottom and a funeral procession crossing meant turning into the side street for preservation of life. Thank God for that lane. A gutter and a fence later I ruefully picked myself up and carried that wild machine home. I felt a bit like Banjo Patterson's 'Mulga Bill from Eaglehawk who caught the cycling craze'.

These of course were pretty standard childhood scrapes. But I see God's hand in it all. One thing that I believe preserved my body was the fact that during primary school we church children were part of a childhood temperance lodge when we vowed never to drink alcohol all our lives. That vow is with me to this day.

#### Preparation

What prepares a person for the ministry? This part of the story is much more detailed and important.

#### Education.

There was the usual schooling process - scholarship at the end of Grade 7 in 1946, the Junior Public exam 1948, the Senior Public 1950, the latter two with high honours.

Then University – some years of self-discovery, however painful. I chose initially (note: *I chose*) to do medicine. I think my motive was that it was the biggest and most prestigious placement in the Uni. And I was becoming more and more of the opinion that I was the best. God had to disavow me of that thought. It has been a long process but it began with some failures. In fact those failures resulted in my being in and out of medical school for 5 years. Still I learnt a lot through it all – I learnt that my reliance on an extremely good short-term memory (swotting the night before exams) doesn't work at University level.

I learnt that I wasn't the best but in fact I was very ordinary. It has taken a long time to realise that and what's more to admit it to myself. I learnt the value of having to work for a living to pay my way. I learnt how to operate an office accounting machine. I learnt that being the sanguine person that I am did not fit with the amount of detailed long-term knowledge required by a doctor. On a more spiritual note my dream of becoming a missionary doctor was over.

So eventually, I applied to the Queensland Education Department for teacher training which I completed in 1956. There followed 8 years of teaching maths and science at Mackay (Queensland) High School and the QIT, plus a year in Brisbane. During this time I continued the education process part-time, completing an Associate in Education and a science degree in 1965.

I entered the ministry in February 1966 and completed the 5 year Baptist Theological college course for pastoral ministry with first-class honours plus a post-graduate BD from the Melbourne College of Divinity. Later because of a potential teaching role in theological education I completed the Doctor of Ministry degree with Fuller Theological Seminary in the USA.

All of this provided a broad general educational base for ministry.

### Life experiences

There were experiences of church life as part of the manse family from age 5. Being of necessity an only child meant that I was taken to almost every meeting of the church family. Yes they were often boring. And yes, I don't wonder that some people designated me as that 'little terror'. But I learnt a lot about how churches run and how people behave, mostly with grace and love, but sometimes there were those who for whatever reason could not be called 'Christ-like'. Needless to say there were times I also didn't belong in the Christ-like category.

I saw the joys, but also the disappointments that are part of a pastor's life. I saw what one person called 'the perpetual grind of the pulpit'. I learnt how to mow the church grass (about an acre) years on end. I learnt that not many thank or encourage others. I learnt the damage the misuse of power can cause, but I also saw how love, perseverance and the courage to confront can win in the end. I learnt not to be overly concerned with 'blessed subtractions', but it has taken me many years of ups and downs to not be influenced by the numbers game in church life. I learnt to be wary of people coming from another nearby church with some criticism of that church. They usually brought their baggage with them.

Another invaluable church experience was being involved in a church plant. After graduating from Teachers' College in 1956 I was posted to Mackay High school. There was no Baptist church in that rapidly growing sugar city. We (Nell and I were married in August 1956) got involved with some great Church of Christ folk.

But at the beginning of 1958 the Queensland Baptist Home Mission sent Rev. Norm Mergard to plant a church. Norm immediately recruited me to help. What a three-year express ride that was! I was secretary and adult leader. I watched a brilliant church planter and builder at work. I will always be indebted

to my older brother for his patience and nurture, his energy and example. Is it any wonder that in later ministry I was able to lead in 3 church plants.

There were not only church life experiences but also everyday life experiences that prepared me for ministry.

There were the Sunday school external exams which were a feature of Sunday school life in the 40's and 50's – scripture memorisation that stays with me today and forever. There was Christian Endeavour which involved leading meetings preparing 'papers' which were in fact short essays or messages on set Biblical topics. I began teaching my first Sunday school class at age 13 in a new church plant on Sunday afternoons.

One experience from my Sunday school years remains etched vividly in my memory.

I was about 11. My father received a call from a lady who wished her 3 year-old daughter to attend Sunday school which in those years was an afternoon event. So Stanley was dispatched every Sunday to walk the 2 kilometres to the house, walk her hand in hand to Sunday school (another 2k) and return (a first girlfriend? I don't think so!). After a year or so her little brother joined the procession.

So why is this so memorable? Many years later (in the 1990's) I happened to read of a CMS missionary who had planted many churches in Sabah in what was British North Borneo and who had won, trained and mentored many church planters in Asia. The name Sylvia Jeanes seemed familiar. And sure enough it was that very girl. In 2008 I, together with her Sunday school teacher, Gwen Patterson, had the privilege of meeting up with her in Brisbane just before she in her late 60's returned to the field. I have since felt that had I done nothing else in the Kingdom, I would be content.

I also joined the local church preachers' class at 13 – very threatening and humbling. Then from 14 on there were CSSM (now Scripture Union) beach missions most Christmas holidays. During my High school years I was always part of the Crusader group weekly meetings and prayer group.

Then there was the experience of teaching day in day out for 9 years in High school and in the evening to Diploma Engineering young adults. What better preparation for ministry than that – preparing and presenting on the hour every hour - maintaining order and interest in the classroom – creating relationships with students – seeing young people grow and mature, reaching their goals in life and even an occasional one coming to faith.

I well remember the class of 1960. This was the first group I had taken through High school from start to graduation. In 1985 they invited me as guest speaker to their 25 year re-union. All present were professional people and some few were professed Christians.

One of the many things I discovered in school was to remember names. One day at the beginning of a year meeting a class for the first time, quite out of the blue, I said 'give me your names' which they did.

I then said, 'See if I can remember you' which I did – all 42 of them. It was a revelation. I do not quote this to big-note myself. It is a gift of God which became invaluable from that time on, not only in school but in the life of the ministry, particularly among young people.

I loved my years in the teaching profession and I was loved by my students. A simple though bizarre example of that – one night a great explosion outside our house saw the end of my old wooden letterbox (practical chemistry at work). The next day I was greeted at the start of class with a ceremonial presentation of a new metal letterbox they had lovingly made in their manual arts class. We all had a good laugh and were the best of friends thereafter.

Another great learning experience during the teaching years was in extra-curricular school life. Wednesday afternoons were given over to hobby and other interest groups. In my first year out, being the junior on staff I naturally was given the group no one else wanted – the boys' choir. This consisted of those boys who were not interested in anything else, least of all singing. They hated it.

What to do? We started with some sea shanties. They loved the 'yo ho heave ho's' and with perseverance they began to sing in tune. From then on with much encouragement they became the highlight of the speech night programme and for some years that followed. My years of singing in the church choir as both boy soprano and baritone paid off. Later I was to lead the school choir in the production of a number of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. And the church choirs.

I also got the job of school rugby league coach. The boys knew more about it than I did, but I learnt that coaching is as much about encouragement and morale as about skill. We won the schools' championship. Eventually some idiot organised a staff/students match. My contribution was a broken fibula.

I loved teaching. I could have made it my life's work had not the Lord intervened.

### **Preparation for ministry**

There were these life experiences, yes. But most significant of all in preparation for the ministry were the many God experiences along the way. Where to begin?

I was a believer (at least mentally) from my youngest years. My Godly mother's prayers were most influential.

As an only child, it was my habit to talk to myself a lot. It was many years before I realised that the Lord by His Spirit was part of these conversations and that I was not just mulling over things with myself but also with Him – a transforming revelation. Most day to day decisions are made in this way – is it logical, reasonable, does it do no harm, and is it in line with already revealed biblical principles?

An early experience of God at work through His people, His church, occurred when I was about 8. My father at this time was pastor of our Gordon Park church. A Salvationist family, mother, father and 3 adult daughters, with whom my parents had been associated in earlier years believed that the scripture taught that

baptism was an obedience to the call of Jesus on their lives. The mother, father and the two eldest daughters were baptised in a very moving service in the church. The youngest daughter was a grand mal epileptic, often fitting several times a day. It was felt too dangerous to baptise her. She, however, believed it was right for her to be baptised. So they filled the bath at home with warm water (it took hours boiling the downstairs copper), the family and the church elders crowded into the bathroom, and after prayer she was baptised. In my knowledge, she did not fit again.

There are times however when God speaks more definitely and specifically. One of those occasions arose when instead of sitting on the church floor playing or going to sleep during the Wednesday night prayer and bible study meeting, I began to take notice. More than that I became wrapped in the Bible studies in the book of Acts. They were God moments.

Later in primary school years my Grandfather preached on the four horsemen of the apocalypse from Revelation. I can't recall how theologically accurate his interpretations were but he did 'scare hell outa me'. This aroused further interest in the hereafter. That reminds me of a very present and real interest in that topic.

Again in the 40's the church was having a week of evening evangelistic meetings with Rev. John G. Ridley preaching. My admiration for this older brother in Christ is unbounded – how in incessant strong pain from a piece of World War I shrapnel in his neck he continued so powerfully to present the gospel over all those years has never ceased to move me – what a model of God's grace and power.

Leading up to these meetings we had church prayer times for unsaved people to come. As a young teen I was involved. One particular person who was a focus of our prayer was Harry. Harry was the husband of one of the church ladies, father of 7 children, played on the wing for Redcliffe rugby league, was foreman for one of the largest plumbing companies in the State and was also known to fight like a thrashing machine. On the last (Sunday) night I was sitting in my pew when who should take the almost only vacant seat beside me was Harry. Yes I was a bit scared and yes, I prayed.

When the appeal was given I felt him brush past me. God had laid His hand on Harry. He went on to become a deacon and elder in his church the rest of his life. I knew as never before that God answers prayer.

A God moment occurred at 16. I had been given as a Sunday school prize the book 'Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret' at age 12. All my attempts to read it had failed. Then one night with little else to do I picked it up and couldn't put it down. It captivated me and took me another (small) step on the journey of faith. God answers prayer and keeps His promises.

### **Family**

Well you may ask what family has to do with preparation for the ministry.

First, there's heritage. I believe on my mother's side the great grandparents were British missionaries to Jamaica – my grandparents were devout Christians and all their children involved directly in Christian work. One of my cousins, Eva Burrows, became world leader of the Salvation Army.

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## Pastoring in the 'Good Old Days'!

### Rev. H. L. McIntyre's ministry at Lanefield/Marburg (1950-1956)

*This account, which was written by Rev H L McIntyre and is used with permission of the family, was discovered recently in the Baptist Church Archives Qld. The photo was supplied by and used with permission of family.*



Rev. and Mrs. H. L. McIntyre arrived at Lanefield on Boxing Day 1949, in order to assume the pastorate of the two Churches of Lanefield and Marburg. The significance of the date lies in the fact that it was the traditional

date of the Lanefield's Sunday School picnic, and the newcomers had the opportunity of meeting many of the Church folks at the one time.

Mr. McIntyre was a former missionary of the China Inland Mission. As a matter of fact he was born in China of missionary parents. He was converted as a boy at the China Inland Mission School at Chefoo, North China, returned to Australia after completing his schooling, then after working for a few years in Brisbane, felt the call of God to full-time service, and received his missionary training at the Melbourne Bible Institute. He served in China from 1931 to 1939, when he had to return to Australia owing to ill health.

He entered the Baptist ministry in 1943, and the same year commenced the ministerial course with the Queensland Baptist College. He was ordained in 1947. When he became pastor of the Lanefield and Marburg Churches, these two churches were both independent, and also independent of each other, but they agreed to share their pastor. He used to take both services at Lanefield on one Sunday, and both services at Marburg on the next Sunday, and so on, alternately. On the Sundays when he was at Marburg, Lanefield made use of lay preachers who usually travelled up from Brisbane; while Marburg on alternate Sundays had the benefit of hearing Rev. S Newell, who had retired, and was living there.

For some time the pastor travelled from Lanefield to Marburg on a bicycle, which proved to be a disadvantage whenever the weather turned wet. However his hosts at Marburg would often warn him to go home when storms began to threaten.

Later he was able to purchase a horse and sulky outfit. The roads were very bad in those days, and it was always a bumpy ride for the pastor. One of the candle-lamps on the sulky shook to pieces because of the rough

road, and one night the pastor borrowed a hurricane lantern from Mr. Newell in order to drive home. As soon as the horse got on the open road, she took the bit in her teeth and bolted, evidently frightened by the shadows thrown by the bright light of the lantern. The pastor tried to keep the horse away from the fence, but it was a losing battle. When the sulky struck the fence, he was thrown on to the barbed wire and a fence post. Then he found himself wandering round on foot in a dazed condition. Mr. Newell soon came to the rescue, and sent him off to hospital to recover from his gashed face and broken ribs.

Somewhat later, a second, much quieter horse was purchased, which transported the pastor to and from Marburg for a considerable time. Eventually this second horse was involved in a minor accident, in which the axle of the sulky was broken. After this an old, Ford V8 car was purchased, which served the pastor well for a few months,

The manse stood next door to the church building, and was about a mile and a half north of the Lanefield railway station. The house was all right in the dry weather, the drawback being that it had a 'valley roof', and during spells of wet weather, that valley used to leak. For many months a row of tubs and buckets stood together in the back room to catch the water. The pastor's job was to climb on to the roof and cover all the nails in the valley with a bitumen paste. This would hold for a week or two, then would have to be renewed. Before the pastor left, the whole roof was taken off and re-erected with a single peak.

The Christian Endeavour Society at Lanefield was one of the bright spots of the work. At the 'break-ups' at the end of each year, about twenty young people would gather at the Manse for a Chinese meal. It is gratifying to know that many of these young people are still workers in the Rosewood Church today.

The pastor visited the Institution for Inebriates at Marburg regularly, trying to help the inmates, but without marked success. He also regularly visited the Ashwell and Calvert State Schools to give religious instruction. Two memorable occasions were the visits to Lanefield of Miss Monica Farrell, and of the Gospel Waggon, which was manned at that time by Rev. J. W. Fletcher. There was at least one conversion from that visit.

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On my father's side, my grandfather was born into a prestigious Jewish family but when converted at a Salvation Army open-air meeting, was disbarred from the family. My father became a Baptist pastor serving for 60 years till his death in 1998.

My devout mother and father certainly had a marked influence on my life but my own entry into the ministry was a singular decision unrelated to their influence. In other words I did not become a minister just because my father was.

Then there's my own family. The parenting and raising of our 5 children has certainly had its effect on me in preparation for the ministry. How, you say? It has enhanced respect for life. It has developed devotion, commitment and perseverance. It has created understanding of people's needs, dreams and personalities. It has by comparison strengthened my understanding of the church as the family of God.

These were the years of preservation and albeit, however unwittingly, God was preparing me for the ministry life. The light and dark threads were woven together to form the pattern of his choosing.