

THE BAPTIST RECORDER

Journal of the Baptist Historical Society of N.S.W.

Vol.1 No.1
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Editor:
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24 New St.
Balgowlah Heights 2093

EXPLANATION

As will be noted, the Committee of the Baptist Historical Society of N.S.W. thinks the time has arrived for the issue of our own News-sheet, which it is anticipated, will appear twice yearly. We trust this journal will induce more people to take an active interest in our Society; and will at all times be pleased to hear from our readers on relevant matters.

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OFFICE BEARERS -

Prior to Annual Meeting.

Chairman - Dr. K. N. Manley,
Baptist Theological College. 880201

Secretary - Mrs. L. Ollif,
Hornsby 473496

Treasurer - Mr. H. Watkin-Smith
Springwood (047) 511275

Research Officer - Mr. J. F. Maitland
Carrbelltown (046) 250545

Archivist - Mr. N. Leeder
Epping 8697457

Membership Fee - \$3 p.a.
Pensioners & Students - \$1. p.a.
(due at Annual Meeting)

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Anticipated Meetings -
for the next twelve months:

April 21 - Annual General Meeting
The Meaning and Practice of
Ordination Among Baptists -
Third Annual Lecture -
Dr. K. R. Manley

June 16 - Paper by ...
Mr. J. D. McMillan
NORTHBRIDGE Church

August 18 - Paper by ...
Rev. T. Windon
LITHGOW Church

October 20 - Paper by ...
Mr. F. J. Church
REV. Wm. HIGLETT

February 16 - Paper by ...
Miss Jean Maclean
MISS EDNA HALE .. Missionary

All Meetings begin at 8p.m. and
are held at the Theological
College, 120 Herring Road,
Eastwood, unless otherwise advised.

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OUR MEMBER

It is with deep regret that
we recently learned of the pass-
ing of the first of our members
since the commencement of the
Society over three years ago.

Mrs. FRANCES CHURCH
was, perhaps not one of our most
vocal members, but she had been
with us since our earliest meet-
ings, and she could always be re-
lied on to give us quiet support.
Her death on January 16, will be
a personal loss to all who knew
her. Her passing is particularly
felt in our Society, although we
rejoice to know she has gone Home,
because our lady members are very
much in the minority, and we can-
not afford to lose one.

Our very deepest sympathies
go to her husband, Mr. F. J. Church
who is also one of our most
valued Members.

ANNUAL REPORT

To be presented at the Annual Meeting, 21st April, 1977. It does not seem anything like a year since the Secretary last undertook the task of compiling the Annual Report of the Baptist Historical Society of N.S.W. As noted then, our Society continues to move quietly but steadily forward. Probably our main task is the preservation of records of the Baptist Denomination and its Churches, so that these valuable items may be available for future research. Items continue to reach us from their present custodians, who now place a lot more value on their records than used to be the case, and our invaluable Archivist, Mr. N. Leeder, continues to deal with them on our behalf.

In this respect, we have found most useful the Grant of \$200 from the Baptist FOUNDATION of N.S.W. Limited, and also a Government Grant received through the ROYAL AUSTRALIAN Historical Society.

Our membership does not increase as we would like it to, as, while we do attract new members constantly, we find that our old and valued members frequently move away. We trust the Paper we have commenced will, in some measure, overcome this difficulty. Also, we deeply regret the loss of our valued member, the late Mrs. FRANCES CHURCH.

The quality of our bi-monthly meetings continues to be high, and the last Annual Meeting, at which Rev. D. S. Baker presided, was the best attended we have had. Rev. R. Leckie, of Wollongong University, delivered a most enlightening Lecture on Theological Education Trends.

Other meetings were addressed by Dr. David Bollen, Macquarie University and Mr. John Maitland.

Additionally, we visited the Camden Church in August to take part in a Convention concentrating on the history of the A.B.M.S. in IRIAN JAYA, and in October, some of our members joined with others from the beautiful old PETERSHAM church, to hear Rev. Roy HENSON read a very informative paper concerning the history of one of Sydney's oldest Baptist Churches. Again, the Secretary attended the Annual Conference of the ROYAL Australian Historical Society, and participated in some most interesting discussions at the City and Newtown, and in a tour of historical WINDSOR, preceded by Divine Service in the beautiful and historical Church of ST. MATTHEW.

The Secretary also visited PARRAMATTA church for its 125th Anniversary, and sent greetings to other churches who celebrated, including GRAFTON and LITHGOW.

We continue to receive enquiries on historical subjects connected with our churches, and these are dealt with appropriately by Mr. Leeder, Dr. Manley or myself.

In conclusion, I wish to thank our Officers for the excellent support they have accorded our Chairman, Dr. Manley, and myself throughout the year. As always, Mr. LEEDER, particularly, continues to devote many hours of hard work to his cataloguing. We are also grateful to the Editor of The Australian Baptist for his interest during the year.

Our hope is that our new year will bring us more Members, and yet more interest in the work we are doing through the Baptist HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

(signed) LORNA OLIF
Secretary.

MEETINGS -

During the Year

Rev. R. Leckie, M.A., B.D. (Annual): Gold brought out middle-class intellectual people, who looked to England

for culture, and most of the Baptists among these went to the Church in COLLINS STREET, Melbourne. In 1860, Rev. TAYLOR went there, and started the first theological classes for training men for the ministry. Ten years previously, six of the young men brought out by Dr. John LANG joined the BATHURST STREET Church to be trained. Only one actually became a minister, William CAREY, who joined Parramatta Church. Rev. GREENWOOD, Bathurst Street, left to go to education. About five men were trained in the CONGREGATIONAL College. In 1856, Land was granted to Universities for use by the various denominations. The Theological College for Baptists was formed in 1915.

Dr. DAVID BOLLEN - on his Monograph Australian Baptists Religious Minority:

He was encouraged to see church people taking such an interest in their own history. He was working on an idea in his own mind, but also, it was the first venture of a professional historian into the realm of Baptist history. A professional Historian approaches his subject as an enquirer, not as an advocate or even as a critic. Usually Baptist ministers wrote a denominational history to commemorate an event. These histories were helpful, but the approach would be different, as their emphasis must be on coverage and for their purposes of exhortation. A professional historian approaches from a more "human" point of view; his comments are in terms of the tangible. He became aware of a different tone in the material that was reaching London in the early days from Victoria and South Australia, as distinct from that

from New South Wales. This was odd, as Australian life has usually been fairly uniform. These variations in Baptist reports intrigued him. Baptists arrived in Victoria later than they arrived in N.S.W., and they arrived in larger numbers; they rather rapidly became a stronger cause than those in N.S.W. The 1914 War influenced the moving ahead of Christianity and western civilization together. It was the weakening period of the Church as an institution over the mind of man. This was the time of the BAPTISTS, who knew what they believed, whereas there was confusion among other churches, so in the 1920's, there was progress for Baptists.

CAMDEN CHURCH -

A.B.M.S. in Irian Jaya

Rev. D. BROWN and N. MELZER outlined the history of the Baptist work in Irian Jaya; assisted by an excellent booklet on the subject; compiled by the Church. There are 3 churches throughout the BALIEM VALLEY. After DeMeresis from Malaya set foot in New Guinea in 1526-7, the early explorers were interested in trade routes. The name was altered by Indonesia in 1963. Captain COOK landed at Cook's Bay and Cook's River, and Captain John HAYES of the East India Company, claimed the island for Britain. JOHN MORESBY discovered the Harbour named after him, and people began to buy land there. In 1921, Captain KREMER was the first white man to go into the BALIEM area. In 1939, the Christian World Alliance appointed two missionaries to the lower Baliem area. The DANI people were ready to receive God's message, and in 1956, it was felt that Baptist work should move into the Highlands.

The white faces of the missionaries and their arrival in the "big bird" were in the tradition of the

DANI ancestors. The people assumed they were spirits sent to stop them from fighting among the tribes ... so they did just that. A movie film and two lots of slides advanced the recital of the history of the work. The Conference was presided over by the Pastor of the Church, Rev. R. D. ELLEM, who is also one of our members. There was a fine, friendly, family atmosphere, and an excellent smorgasbord provided by the ladies of the Church, who had the right idea in serving it, as we filed through to collect each item in orderly fashion. A most interesting and enjoyable way of absorbing another chapter in the varied history of the Baptist denomination.

Rev. R. HENSON

Petersham Baptist Church

Petersham was an elite status suburb when the Church was established, and Sir HUGH DIXSON regarded as the Mother Church of the Denomination. Its history has been preserved back to 1882, when it was commenced as the eighth Baptist cause in Sydney. The building, erected two years later, is among the oldest still in use by Baptists. Only it and NEWTOWN Church are still basically the same as they were originally erected.

Seventeen members formed the original Church, including Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Dixson, wealthy philanthropists, Mr. Charles Morling and Mr. and Mrs. William Burton. The first church to be erected in the area was the Roman Catholic in 1840.

The site was purchased by HUGH DIXSON, who had gone from the Bathurst Street Church, and who lent \$1,000, interest free, for five years to build a church based on the design of NEWTOWN, with Mr. John Stone as the Honorary architect.

The first Pastor was Rev. John SOPER, an Englishman called from Victoria, who stayed ten years during which time 456 people were added to the membership.

Mr. and Mrs. Henson and their helpers had mounted a fine display of old photographs, documents, booklets, etc., and the Church can be truly proud of the way it has preserved these valuable artefacts over the years. A most enjoyable supper was also provided by the ladies.

FOR YOUR NOTEBOOK -

The Gore Hill Cemetery Trust is anxious to compile a book giving details of people buried in that graveyard. Any relatives of Baptist people buried there could send details of their lives to Miss E. Sims, 12a Nelson Road, Lindfield, 2076.

This year, the churches at NEW LAMBTON and NORTHBRIDGE will each be 50 years old.

LITHGOW church was 70 years old last year. We have been invited to consider visiting there between October and February, 1978. The concept is a picnic day, with lunch at the historical Zig Zag; with a ride on the Steam Train; a pilgrimage to churches of historical interest in LITHGOW and tea in the Church hall.

The Pastor, Rev. T. WINDON, has offered to screen a 16mm film, made for the Jubilee of his Church which gathering local historical societies would also be invited to attend.

Would anybody interested in participating please advise our Secretary, so that adequate arrangements may be made? Also advise if you can offer transport, or if you require it.

As the Baptist Historical Society is affiliated with the ROYAL Australian Historical Society, our Members may attend Lectures held approximately each fortnight, on a Tuesday evening, at History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney.

On 31st May, the lecture is "Compiling a New Dictionary of Australian Art". If you are interested, 'phone our Secretary (47.3496) for further details.

It is desired to keep as complete a record as possible of the Denomination. Therefore, if you have Church records, old books, manuscripts, brochures, pictures or biographies of persons who have made an outstanding contribution to Church life, we would be very pleased to receive them for safe keeping in our Archives. Many Churches are now taking a greater interest in their own historical material. Should you wish to retain yours, perhaps you could take copies for us, so that we may maintain a record of each Church.

We anticipate the BAPTIST RECORDER will be issued twice yearly.

L. Ollif, Secretary .. 41 Galston Rd., Hornsby 2077.