

THE BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

THE BAPTIST RECORDER

APRIL, 1983

CHAIRMAN: DR K.R. MANLEY

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

EDITOR : M.J. PETRAS

120 HERRING ROAD
EASTWOOD NSW 2122

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As we complete another year's work I would like to comment on some general matters relating to our Society.

One specific encouragement has been the enthusiastic commencement of a sister society in Victoria. I am grateful to have had some modest part in this development. Whitley College organised a Baptist Heritage week at which I was honoured to be one of the speakers. The interest and enthusiasm of participants was such that an immediate response was made to my challenge that a Victorian Society should be commenced. Their objectives are similar to our own and they have already collected some significant archival material.

This development encourages us to plan more clearly for a national society. Already we have exchanged minutes and information both with Victoria and Queensland where Dr David Parker is hopeful of reactivating their historical society. The dream of a national record of all Baptist archival material may yet become a reality! Certainly a bibliography of all Baptist publications is urgent.

This is a familiar note which I have sounded before, but the present encouragements make it increasingly a possibility.

Moreover we are continuing our publication planning, and are grateful to note several local churches writing histories at significant historic milestones.

All in all there are many reasons why we need to challenge more of our Baptist people to become active supporters of our Society. I commend the Society's activities to you.

Ken R. Manley

(Chairman)

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The year from April, 1982 until 1983 has been, as usual, a year of quiet accomplishment. Our continuing aim is the collection and preservation of the archival material of our Baptist churches, particularly throughout NSW. This is a task with which our volunteers have struggled valiantly for some years. In this regard, great progress was made at the beginning of our year, in that we settled in the Harold Gow Room in the College Library, and we elected Rev. E. Archer as Archivist.

Use of the Room has enabled us to procure fittings where the material may be sorted, catalogued and stored. In this respect, the services of Mr Archer are already deeply appreciated. As more order has emerged, it becomes plain that still there are churches which have not provided us with any of their documents. Nevertheless, he is able to give increasing assistance to churches, groups and individuals doing historical research.

Attendances at meetings, normally four annually, are steadily increasing, so that we now have to frequently use the Chapel, which provides more room for us. Our Speakers this year, of high quality and very interesting, have been Principal G.E. Ball of Burleigh College, Adelaide; Member Peter Young; and Mr Harold Gow, of Epping, each giving deep research to produce very valuable historical Papers. (A paper prepared by Mr R.E. Walker was read in his absence.)

We receive increasing numbers of invitations to historical society meetings, and I attend as many of these as possible, with some assistance from the Treasurer, Michael Petras.

The Friends of Gore Hill Cemetery, having saved the old burial ground, are endeavouring to record the inscriptions, including the Baptist Section, but despite enquiries, I have been unable to obtain much information regarding the Trustees who administered this section for many years. It is hoped to restore the historic old Archway, with the familiar text which must have been a source of comfort to many mourners down the years, and it has been suggested that Baptists may like to make donations towards this work.

Finally, this year our publications have occupied a good deal of time. *Soldier and Evangelist* has sold approximately 1000 copies, and *First Australian Baptists*, around 620. With Grants from the Royal Australian Historical Society, they have provided the finance for our third book, to be launched in the near future, under the title *Baptist Growth in NSW, 1900-1939*.

Some of our members have also had some involvement with encouraging Baptists in other States to commence their own historical societies on similar lines to ours.

It is felt that all, particularly our young Ministers, who find time to take some interest in our activities, can only benefit from learning more about the early days of our Denomination and of our Members, outstanding and otherwise, of past days.

Happy and useful New Year to All!

Lorna Ollif
(Secretary)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1983Income

Balance brought forward, 1st April, 1982		\$ 97.26
Membership Fees		135.00
Donations		15.60
Book Sales: <i>Soldier and Evangelist</i>	115.33	
<i>The First Australian Baptists</i>	<u>156.18</u>	271.51
Grant: Royal Australian Historical Society		100.00
Bank Interest		2.71
Transfer Investment Funds		200.00
	Total	<u>\$822.08</u>

Expenditure

Printing - Society's magazine		\$145.00
Advertising		20.80
Postage and Stationery		5.50
Annual Lecture Fee		25.00
RAHS Conference - delegate's expenses		40.00
Membership Fee: RAHS		40.00
Travelling Expenses: G.B. Ball	121.60	
D.M. Himbury	<u>248.20</u>	369.80
		646.10
	Balance carried down	<u>175.98</u>
	Total	<u>\$822.08</u>

1st April, 1983 Balance carried forward \$175.98

Funds Invested (as at 31.3.83)

<u>Term Deposit</u>	Principal	\$1,500.00
	Interest	369.10
		<u>\$1,869.10</u>
'On Call' Deposit	Principal	800.00
	Interest	49.16
		<u>\$849.16</u>
	Total	<u>\$2,718.26</u>

M.J. Petras

(Treasurer)

BOOK SALES

The sale of our two publications has been reduced to a relative trickle this past year compared to previous years. Nevertheless, as we have recovered our production costs we can quite happily settle for a continuing steady sale of our books.

The figures for both publications are as follows:

Soldier and Evangelist:

1982-83	32 books	\$ 115.33	Donations	\$66.25
Previous years	<u>964</u> "	<u>2,404.43</u>	"	<u>0.60</u>
Totals	996 "	\$2,519.76	"	\$66.85

The First Australian Baptists:

1982-83	42 books	\$ 156.18	Donations	\$12.50
Previous years	<u>583</u> "	<u>2,280.11</u>	"	<u>23.45</u>
Totals	625 "	\$2,436.29	"	\$35.95

OUR THIRD PUBLICATION

We shall be shortly launching our third monograph to be published by the Society. Printing delays have prevented us from making it available for the annual meeting.

The book is by Michael Petras, the Society's Treasurer, and is titled *Baptist Growth in New South Wales, 1900-1989*. It is a substantial portion of the author's MA thesis which was successfully presented to Macquarie University last year.

The book analyses the three reasons offered for the belated growth and expansion of Baptist churches in this state during this period: Home Mission work, immigration and evangelism. Among other things it assesses the role of Reverend A.J. Waldock, Home Mission Superintendent and the denomination's first full-time officer. There is also an account of the various problems encountered in church extension and of the tensions which sometimes existed between the Home Mission Society and others.

The book tabulates the pattern of growth in church membership and the gains and losses experienced over this period. There is particular reference to the two major events of this period, the First World War and the Great Depression.

The mention of evangelism brings to mind the names of well-known figures in NSW Baptist history and their role and contribution to evangelism are briefly considered. There is some discussion of the theological outlook which characterised Baptists during this period and provided the impetus for their compelling belief in the predominantly evangelistic nature of the mission of the Church. This leads to a concluding study of the various strategies employed by the denomination in fulfilling its evangelistic task.

The author does not believe his is the final word on the subject. But, both directly and indirectly, he helps to fulfil the request made to the Society several years ago by the Baptist Union of NSW: to provide a history of evangelism among Baptists in New South Wales.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please record the dates of the remaining meetings for this year in your personal diary and church calendar. Each meeting is held at the Baptist Theological College of NSW, 120 Herring Road, Eastwood at 8.00 pm.

Thursday, 16th June: Dr Alan Roberts, President of the Oral History Association of Australia (NSW Branch) will speak on the importance of oral history for Baptists.

Thursday, 20th October: Mr Hubert Watkin-Smith (Member) will present a paper entitled: *Some Highlights of the History of Parramatta Baptist Church (formed 1851)*.

BAPTIST HISTORICAL INTEREST IN OTHER STATES

Victoria

The Baptist Historical Society of Victoria was formed on 15 July 1982. Since then two further meetings have been held. It is proposed to hold three meetings this year. One member is Reverend L.A. Cupit, formerly of our own Society.

Queensland

The Baptist Union of Queensland has a fairly inactive Historical Committee. Nevertheless, interest is being sustained by Dr David Parker who has recently completed a doctoral thesis on Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism in Australia. He has forwarded to the Society's archives a listing of the archival material in the Baptist Union's office and in the Oxley Library in Brisbane.

Tasmania

Several individuals are working on aspects of Tasmanian Baptist history. Mr Laurie Rowston is currently writing the history of the first Baptist church in Hobart. Pastor Greg Luxford of Perth church is researching for a thesis on "The Contribution made by William and Maryann Gibson of Native Point to Baptist Work in Tasmania".

The Baptist Union of Tasmania is negotiating with the University of Tasmania to place their archival material with them. Mr Ron Soundy of Hobart writes: "We have no society here but I am doing my best to encourage the preservation of records from Churches throughout the State ...".

LOCAL CHURCH HISTORIES

Three of our members have been active in the production of histories of local churches.

Footsteps to the Present. A History of Baptists in Springwood, by Hubert Watkin-Smith. 1982. Prepared by our Vice-Chairman, and archivist of the Springwood church, this booklet of 83 pages gives a comprehensive history of the church as it completed its 25th year.

Local Church Histories (contd)

Petersham after a Hundred Years by Peter Young, 1982. A small but valuable survey of the story of one of our churches which has lived through days of affluence to discover new patterns of ministry in a changing situation.

People with a Purpose. Epping Baptist Church 1933-1983 by H.W. Gow and K.R. Manley, 1983. A full history of 122 pages offers insights into the development of one of our largest churches today.

(All may be obtained from the Society or direct from the various churches.)

BOOK REVIEW

Sydney Friends (Review of the sesqui-centenary history of the Quakers in Sydney written by Vaughan Evans)

Obviously, the first Quakers were influencing the Christian life of Australia about the time that Baptists commenced to organize themselves in Sydney, as this book of 64 pages was published in 1982 to mark the sesqui-centenary of the first Friends' meeting in Australia.

Just as, in those far-off days the members of the various Christian churches helped each other, so it is fitting in this difficult era for the Baptist Denomination to have some understanding of our fellow Christians in different settings, and *Sydney Friends* provides a comprehensive view of this unobtrusive group of Christians on the local scene. Vaughan Evans himself is well-known in Sydney historical circles, and is a member of the Meeting House in Devonshire Street, Surry Hills. This is the fourth Meeting House, the first having been erected in the then centre of population in Macquarie Street, in 1836.

Early Quaker and early Baptist history have a lot in common. A few members of the Society of Friends in England gradually settled in the new Colony. Around 1818, Elizabeth Fry, with her dedicated interest in the prisoners of Newgate, exercised influence over male convicts being sent to Botany Bay, and even more so with females, taking the practical step of trying to supply each destitute woman with the materials to make at least one patchwork counterpane on the long voyage out, in order to have one possession of value to sell on arrival here.

In 1824, James Backhouse, greatly influenced by this example, became convinced that he had a missionary duty to the needy souls of Australia. With George Washington Walker, he arrived in Hobart in 1832, to spend nearly six years travelling and preaching throughout the settled districts of all the colonies, including the penal settlements of Norfolk Island and Moreton Bay. His writings were to become valuable social comments.

A meeting in the old Courthouse in Elizabeth Street, Sydney, in January, 1835, attracted a congregation of between four and five hundred people. Subsequently, meetings were held regularly although the young Church, like others, had its ups and downs - some very similar to those the Baptists were experiencing, including the discovery that its Meeting House had never been legally transferred. Accordingly, in 1845, the building was lost to the Quakers, and was soon being used as a Baptist Chapel.

It was noted that, as was usual, the building was still being used as a school during the week, the forms and galleries being as the Quakers had used them, but a pulpit had been added! So, directly or otherwise, Baptists were involved in the Society of Friends transferring to Devonshire Street.

Book Review (contd)

It is well worth following the local history of the Quakers down the years, until today, the NSW Branch of the Australian Council of Churches holds its yearly and half-yearly meetings in the Meeting House of the Society of Friends in Devonshire Street.

Lorna Ollif

(*Sydney Friends*, by Vaughan Evans, 1982, \$3. Obtainable from 119 Devonshire Street, Surry Hills, Sydney.)

THE BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Formation and Objectives

The Society was formed on 18th April, 1974. Its objectives are:

1. To encourage research into the history of Baptists, especially those in NSW.
2. To seek and obtain custody of important Baptist records, and to provide for their careful preservation.
3. To encourage the collating and recording of Baptist history.
4. To foster interest in Baptist history at the local Church level.
5. To assist research students at schools, colleges and universities.
6. To publish articles and historical information.
7. To be alert to Church jubilees, centenaries and other significant anniversaries for Baptists, and where possible, to assist in the provision of relevant historical details.
8. To promote care of buildings and sites of historical interest to Baptists.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

CHAIRMAN : Dr K.R. Manley
40 Japonica Road
EPPING NSW 2121 (86 3275)

SECRETARY: Mrs L. Ollif
41 Galston Road
HORNSBY NSW 2077 (477 3496)

TREASURER: Mr M.J. Petras
31 Oakleigh Avenue
THORNLEIGH NSW 2120 (848 0157)

MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME :
ADDRESS:
PHONE : (W)
(H)

Please find enclosed my membership fee for the Baptist Historical Society of New South Wales.

FULL MEMBERSHIP : \$7.00

PENSIONERS & STUDENTS: \$3.00

PLEASE RETURN TO : The Hon. Treasurer
Baptist Historical Society of NSW
C/- Baptist Theological College
120 Herring Road
EASTWOOD NSW 2122