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The ministry of the Reverend John Saunders in Sydney, 1834-1847 (Part 1 of 2)

Rod Benson

Next meeting:
What does it mean to be one of 'Morling's Men'? Dr Chatfield will explore the basis of this idea by following the development of the attitudes and approaches to ministerial training that prevailed at Morling College under the Principalship of GH Morling from 1936 to 1960.

When:
Thursday
7 August 2008

Where:
Faculty Lounge,
Morling College,
120 Herring Rd,
Eastwood

Time: 7.30-9.00 pm

Open to everyone.

Supper follows the presentation.

This is Part 1 of a paper presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Baptist Historical Society of NSW on Thursday 1 May 2008. Part 2, dealing with Saunders' social action, will follow in a later issue of The Baptist Recorder.

Introduction

The Rev John Saunders is arguably the most outstanding colonial Australian Baptist minister. He stands in the shadow of other Protestant pioneers such as Samuel Edward Marsden (1765-1838) and John Dunmore Lang (1799-1878), but has no equal among nineteenth-century Baptists in New South Wales. Saunders was an outstanding preacher, a wise pastor, a strategic church planter, a supporter of world mission, and an exemplar of Christian social responsibility.

Saunders' strengths and interests are not well known by NSW Baptists today. From time to time there were attempts to celebrate his achievements and keep alive his legacy. On 15 September 1963, for example, the Youth and Christian Education Council of the Baptist Union of NSW opened a camp building at Macquarie Fields south-west of Sydney (then undeveloped rural land) and called it Camp Saunders after the pioneer leader. This, along with Camp Carey at Wentworth Falls, in the Blue Mountains, became the denomination's major campsites in the 1960s as youth ministry burgeoned.¹ But the official program of the Centenary Assembly of the Baptist Union of NSW, which includes a brief history of the beginnings of Baptist work in NSW, does not mention him.

More recently, the Baptist Union of Australia, largely through the facilitation of the Canberra Baptist Church, celebrated Saunders' notable contribution to Aboriginal justice with the publication of a booklet coinciding with a peak in the troubled Aboriginal reconciliation movement. Other examples of his social action are less well known. Also in 2001, coincidentally, his name was given to the single men's dormitory at Morling College, the Baptist Theological College of NSW. No other building, monument or award in Australia honours the first official Baptist minister in NSW. Ken Manley naturally featured Saunders in the early pages of his magisterial history of Australian Baptists published in 2006, but the 200th anniversary of Saunders' birth in 2006 went uncelebrated. The year 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Saunders' arrival, with his wife Elizabeth, at Sydney Cove.

Part 1. "Renounce sin and embrace Christ": The life and ministry of John Saunders

John Saunders was born on 7 October 1806 in London into an influential middle class Church of England family. His father, Ebenezer Saunders, was a city alderman, as was his father before him. The motto on their family crest was "*Sans Dieu Rien*" ("Nothing without God").

The young John Saunders was articled to a London attorney and became a solicitor. At the age of 17 he was baptized by immersion and admitted to the membership of the Baptist Church in Cold Harbour Lane, Camberwell, under the ministry of the Rev. E. Steane. At the age of 19, Saunders began preparation for missionary service, making contact with the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) in the hope of being sent to India. The BMS, for its part, required Saunders to agree to attend a Baptist academy for a year and then serve in either the East or West Indies. He declined these terms, but was privately tutored and later studied for a term at the University of Edinburgh, before being ordained to the Baptist ministry in England. He planted Baptist churches at Mason Court, Shoreditch and Ball's Pond, and was minister of two London churches in Shacklewell and Stoke Newington. In 1834, at the age of 28, while minister at Stoke Newington, he declined an opportunity to enter Parliament.

Passage to Sydney

On the other side of the world, in a bustling colonial convict settlement called Sydney Town, the eccentric Rev John McKaeg (c.1790-c.1844?) was fighting a losing battle to maintain his brief and unofficial Baptist ministry, his sobriety and his freedom from debtor's prison. Some members of the fledgling congregation, consisting mainly of Particular Baptists and independent Protestants, felt compelled to write to the BMS seeking a more suitable pastor. On behalf of the Society, the Rev John Dyer approached Saunders, who possessed the means to pay for his own cabin and agreed to embark on a "visit" to Sydney.

Constitutionally the BMS was committed to evangelism "through the heathen world," which did not necessarily include Australia, and it was under no obligation to pay his passage or stipend. Nevertheless, the BMS formally farewelled Saunders at its annual meeting in June 1834, he was "set apart for foreign service" at the Shacklewell Church on 2 July, and on 27 July Saunders and his wife of four months, Elizabeth ("Bessy") Willox, whom he affectionately called "wifey," sailed for Sydney aboard the *George Hibberd*, a 328-ton barque transporting 144 female convicts and 38 free passengers. In addition to free settlers, the ship carried "consigned servants" (convicts), and Saunders was appointed Church of England chaplain to the women among them for the duration of the voyage. He was 28 when he and Elizabeth first set foot on Australian soil at Sydney Cove on 1 December the same year. In contrast to McKaeg, Saunders exercised an "educated, tolerant and rational ministry."

At first sight, Sydney Town made a striking impression on Saunders. It was, he wrote,

like some oriental city rising from the wilderness at the command of a despotic power. On landing its streets appear wretched, sandy and loose, a hovel next to a respectable shop, a hut next to a mansion a Prince might be proud of.

Two weeks later he described the people he had encountered on Sydney streets as "so thin, so sunburnt and many of them so drunk – not a lady to be seen, hardly a

woman. It appeared as if we had landed among a set of the most degraded and uncomfortable beings.” Yet it was to these people he believed he had been called, and in obedience to that divine call he quickly set about planning and organising his new antipodean ministry, recruiting and serving the diverse people of Sydney Town. Saunders and his wife first lived with Robert Bourne (1794-1871), who had been a London Missionary Society missionary in the South Sea Islands but who had moved to Sydney on account of his wife’s ill health. Bourne was a prosperous linen draper, and became a foundation member of the church Saunders was to plant at Bathurst Street. The reality of the situation soon became apparent, and all was not bad. Six weeks after arrival, in a letter to “Miss Saunders” in England, John Saunders acknowledged providence “in bringing much of the salt of the earth to this place.”

Building a Baptist Church in Sydney

Baptist services of worship commenced immediately, first at an unidentified location in York Street and then in the schoolroom attached to St James’ Church of England, known as the Court House Room (on the corner of King and Phillip Streets). These services typically involved the singing of hymns, reading of short passages of Scripture, public prayer and a sermon. Saunders’ stipend, originally set at £120 per year and increased in 1843 to £300, then decreased to £200 amid general privation in 1844, was drawn largely from pew rentals and small personal donations, supplemented from time to time by gifts from his loyal father in England.

John McKaeg was still active with a small group of supporters, and had received a state land grant to erect a place of worship. Saunders appears to have enjoyed a cordial relationship with McKaeg, and successfully negotiated for the transfer of trusteeship of the land to members of his own congregation. On this land, granted in July 1835, he proceeded to build a substantial church. The Bathurst Street Baptist Church, designed by architect and builder John Verge (1782-1861), duly opened on 23 September 1836, and seated up to 400 people. The property continued to serve the church until resumed by the NSW Government for redevelopment just over a century later.

Seven weeks after the opening of the new building, the

church was constituted with ten members. Saunders was the first of the ten names of foundation members entered in the new Roll Book of the church; his provenance was recorded beside his name as “Shoreditch and Camberwell.” The basis of their spiritual union was simply “repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,” words taken from Paul’s account to the Ephesian church recorded in Acts 20:21, “so that the church may consist of faithful men of different Christian denominations.”

The church’s confessional stance was, from its inception, defined as adhering to the doctrinal emphases of the Particular Baptist Denomination and the Shorter Westminster Confession, except where they supported infant baptism or forbade open communion and fellowship. The Bathurst Street Baptist Church appear to have admitted paedobaptists to membership. A three-month provisional membership was also granted to Christians on presentation of a letter of “honourable discharge” from their home church in Britain.

As Australian Baptist historian Ken Manley has pointed out, this was clearly the approach Saunders favoured; “He had no problem in avoiding subjects which might engender divisions in a ‘mixed’ church. His sole object was to lead people to Christ.” In a sermon published in 1842, Saunders declared:

We are not, as some pretend, to lead men to the Divine Redeemer by the instrumentality of sacraments; but are to conduct men to sacraments, by first leading them to Christ. Neither are we to attempt merely to turn men from one party to another or to proselyte them from one sect to another. The Lord Jesus reproved the spirit of proselytism, which is so apt to usurp true zeal for religion, and which animated bigoted and ungodly men in his days. He clearly intimated that fervent attachment to a creed may be co-existent with the greatest baseness ...

Unless our adherents become such from intelligent conviction, and unless, in their devotedness to our views, they are deeply imbued with Christian love, they are likely to bring discredit upon the principles we pro-

fess, and may, in the end, abandon them with the precipitancy with which they embraced them.

Church growth under Saunders

Saunders was not one to adopt a half-hearted, pragmatic or partisan approach to mission or ministry. He was a liberal-minded leader inspired by the eighteenth-century evangelical theology to which he had warmed in England, and operated on the basis of confident Baptist (that is, separatist) convictions. Evidently a good orator and strategist, he was apparently irenic toward those with whom he disagreed. As another Australian Baptist historian, Michael Petras, has observed, “denominational advance for its own sake had little interest for Saunders, and he is not remembered for reasons directly related to his confessional affiliation.” In Saunders’ own words:

Obliged to take a denominational badge in an age of so many divisions, ours indeed is a Baptist communion; but we consider ourselves entitled to a higher distinction; we pursue a nobler aim than the extension and perpetuation of sectarian differences; we assume, and desire to maintain, the style and dignity of a Christian Church; we claim fellowship with the Church universal, and we are willing that any member of that spiritual body shall claim fellowship with us.

The church prospered under Saunders’ ministry. Some did not regard him as an eloquent preacher, though others thought he preached with great power. He was apparently well liked and worked hard on a wide ministry front. By 1847 there were 124 members, and during his time as pastor 191 members were admitted (with fewer than one-third of these undergoing immersion baptism in Sydney prior to being received into membership. In addition to regular Sunday services and fellowship meetings, Saunders took an interest in Sunday School teaching, conducted twice each Sunday to a wide cross-section of the children of Sydney. In July 1843 there were 55 boys and 41 girls enrolled; by 2 January 1848, the day of Saunders’ departure, these had risen to 105 and 63 respectively. Church records indicate that Saunders was the Sunday School examiner, but he may not have taught the classes each week. Subjects were wide-

ranging. On one occasion his subject was transubstantiation; on another he warned the children “against the prevailing sinful amusements of the times such as theatres, cards, dances, balls, billiards, and especially against a fancy (sic) Ball to be given by the unwise Mayor of Sydney.”

As it grew, the Bathurst Street Church commenced Baptist works in other locations. As well as serving the needs of a rapidly growing metropolis (with a large influx of voluntary immigrants), Saunders had “a passion to reach the lonely settlers in New South Wales” and was concerned for “the destitute state of many parts of the colony, where brethren [i.e. fellow Baptists] had settled, as regards religious instruction.” Of particular concern were the settlements of Wollongong, Smithfield, Liverpool and Parramatta. Saunders and his church laid the foundations for the growth of Baptist churches in these and other parts of the colony of NSW, an achievement that, along with his pioneering work at Bathurst Street, led future generations of NSW Baptists to consider the Bathurst Street Church as “the mother church of the denomination.”

Theological differences among Baptists

Differences on the application of doctrinal distinctive ascribed to John Calvin, and to his followers, was a major cause of dissention and schism among colonial Australian Baptists. John Saunders and his Bathurst Street congregation were not immune from these. Like most English Baptists of his time, Saunders subscribed to the (Calvinistic) Particular Baptist tradition, but soon after his arrival in Sydney he felt the holy wrath of Baptists from another congregation in the town who refused to cooperate with him, and was obliged to clarify his theological views. As he put it, the group “refused to cooperate with me because they were of the hyper-calvinistic Order.”

Theological differences in those days often focused on a church’s policy regarding membership and communion. This is illustrated by the assessment of the Rev Allan W. Webb (1838-1902), a Baptist minister instrumental in the formation of the South Australian Baptist Association, who in 1869 distinguished three policy approaches by Baptist churches in Sydney:

Bathurst Street: open membership and open communion (where “the sentiments of the pulpit are anti-

Calvinistic”);

Castlereagh Street: close (i.e. closed) membership and communion (“of the hyper-Calvinistic type of theology”); and

Harris Street: close membership and open communion.

Such differences became public knowledge and weakened the organic unity of the churches and their mission in the community, as well as encouraging movement of individuals and families from one congregation to another with the attendant severing of social relationships. Saunders viewed such dissension as counterproductive to the evangelical cause, but evidently was unable to bring about consensus between the leaders of the various groups. Forced to take sides, he took a position opposing a strong Calvinist theology and ecclesiology. Similar problems over membership and communion were experienced by Baptists in other colonies and in Britain and elsewhere at the time. Ken Manley and Michael Petras suggest that, in view of these tensions and dissensions, the permanent establishment of the Bathurst Street Church was “a tribute in no small degree to its first pastor’s wisdom in successfully accommodating within his congregation the heirs of divergent traditions among British Baptists.”

A sample evangelistic sermon

Saunders was reputed to preach in a manner “characterized by great power and impressiveness.” Although little of his sermons and Christian writing is accessible today, we do have one extended treatise which renders his evangelical commitment and genial nature crystal clear. On Sunday 7 August 1842, he preached a sermon titled, “Invitation to fellowship,” based on Numbers 10:29. A transcript of the sermon was published by Kemp and Fairfax in the same year, along with the explanatory note that it was “somewhat enlarged from the original notes, and published at the request of the Deacons and Members of the Church and congregation.” The sermon gives us a partial insight into the essential style, passion and thought of John Saunders.

Saunders dispenses with preliminaries and begins: “You are witnesses, my friends, how carefully I

have abstained, in my public ministration, from all topics of a sectarian nature. I have acted thus because the first object of the ministry is to lead men to Christ.” His first concern is not to grow Baptists but Christians. At this point in his ministry, however, Saunders is moved to call those in his audience who are “unconnected” with a Sydney church to join the Bathurst Street Baptist Church. He traces the context of the biblical passage, and briefly expounds the text, suggesting that Moses reasoned with Hobab, a Midianite who had rendered admirable service to the Israelites, to remain with them on the grounds of benevolence and self-interest. The “plain” application of the narrative, Saunders suggests, is “an invitation to Christian fellowship,” hence the sermon title. Then, “in humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit for light and power,” he preaches on three aspects of the verse.

First, he speaks of “a goodly company” (pp. 8-16) – the Church Triumphant, but also “any smaller and visible assembly of believers.” For him, a church is “an assembly of sincere Christians, who associate in the name of their Master, to worship him, to celebrate his ordinances, and for purposes of mutual edification.” He refuses, on biblical grounds, to recognise as churches “what are called National Churches, or [...] any known hierarchy.”

He outlines the essential functions of his own local church, including worship, celebration of believer’s baptism and the Lord’s Supper, proclamation of the Word of God, prayer, “[entering] into a covenant against all wickedness,” and the godly exercise of church discipline. He explains his church’s practice to seek to ensure that only born-again and baptised Christians *whose faith is “exemplified in a holy life”* may be admitted to church membership (countering a common misrepresentation in the community that believer’s baptism was the first and only requirement for membership). Yet “We call no man common or unclean, but are ready to receive all who have received the Holy Ghost as well as ourselves.” The church is a community on a journey; “every member has renounced the world, and has taken the pilgrim’s staff.” Enemies, difficulties, peril and extremity are to be expected, but God protects and provides for the church.

Second, Saunders speaks of “A fair prospect” (pp. 16-21) – the anticipation of the joy and rest afforded by heaven, and heaven’s King, at death. “As Israel realized Canaan, so the Christian expects to inherit Heaven.” He emphasizes the free, gracious nature of the divine gift of eternal life made possible through “the ransom wherewith [Christ] redeemed the Church.” He concludes this section:

Can anything be more ravishing than the hope of these pilgrims? The beauty of Canaan was but a faint shadow of the glory that is to be revealed. It is Heaven – Heaven rendered sure by the Word of God, endeared to us by its being a gratuitous mercy, and made doubly dear as the purchased possession of the Son of God.

Third, Saunders speaks of “A kind invitation” (pp. 21-35) – Christians, and especially pastors, appeal to “thoughtless men” to repent and be saved, moved “by a sincere desire for [their] brother’s welfare.” A note of apocalyptic conflagration is also sounded, along with an analogy to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and a plea for sinners to “flee from the wrath to come.” But that is not all:

[t]he Church is also influenced by love ... Urged, therefore, by the jeopardy of the sinner, by the command of his Lord, and by love to souls, the Christian may turn to the worldling, and give him the kind invitation; – Come thou with us; be a Christian; serve God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. Repent and be converted, when times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. Renounce sin and embrace Christ. Abandon your guilty and dangerous position, and begin a pilgrimage to heaven.

The invitation is also to “children of God,” “brethren” who “travel the same road.” Saunders outlines various benefits of local church fellowship, and observes that baptism does not exempt a Christian from participating in the Lord’s Supper, just as “your being a communicant at the Lord’s table will not exonerate you from the duty of being baptised.” A third invitation extends to the prospect of “usefulness” promoted by united Christian

fellowship – that is, “If you are Christians, you possess a zeal to glorify God, you pity the ungodly,” and join with other like-minded believers to welcome God’s kingdom and do God’s will.

Saunders then embarks on a series of challenges and exhortations. Of particular interest is his reference to God’s purpose in providentially placing Baptists in Sydney:

Be equally solicitous to cultivate the spirit of love; present an attractive aspect to the world, and to the Universal Church ... Your position at the great inlet of emigration; at the haven of intercourse with missionary stations, and with half-civilized and barbarous tribes; and your establishment in the metropolis of a rising state, render the exhortation more important.

Finally, Saunders warns non-Christians of the danger of their unpreparedness for death and divine judgment, urging them to turn to God and embrace the Christian gospel:

My friends! as certainly as time carries you to the grave, ruthlessly resists your struggles, and denies all entreaties for a delay or a return, a certainty of which you are now painfully conscious, so remorseless death, with inexorable pertinacity, will sweep you down to perdition ... Pause, O sinner! and consider thy ways! Awake, O sleeper! arise and call upon thy God, if so be that he will be merciful unto thee. The mercy of the journey and the blessedness of the inheritance will then be thine. For the Spirit and the Bride say *come*, and let him that heareth say *come*, and *let him that is athirst come*; AND WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM TAKE OF THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY.

It may seem significant that, at one point in this sermon, Saunders describes Hobab, the Midianite, as “a native occupant of the wilderness [invited] to join the privileged company, and obtain the blessings they hoped for.” Was Saunders anticipating the reception of Aboriginal Christians into church membership? Probably not, as he goes on to describe “the sons of the desert” as “the man of the world.”

Strategic evangelism and mission

In addition to local evangelistic initiatives, Saunders sought wider evangelistic outreach opportunities. Four examples will suffice. First, as noted above, he engaged in church extension activities, maintaining a number of preaching stations in what is now suburban Sydney, including one at South Head at the entrance to Sydney Harbour. In October 1839, Saunders laid the foundation stone of the South Head Independent Chapel, on land donated by one F. Mitchell. On the occasion, Saunders “gave a rapid sketch of the circumstances which led to the building of a place of worship in that spot [noting that] five years ago on his arrival in the colony, by permission of Captain Siddons, he preached in a room in the light-house ... but ultimately the duty of supplying that neighbourhood with the Gospel had devolved on his honourable brother [the Rev W.P.] Crook.” Saunders also offered the prayer at the laying of the foundation stone of the Independent Chapel in Pitt-Street, overseen by Rev Dr Ross. Another venture was the establishment of the NSW Baptist Building and Missionary Association in December 1840, whose inaugural meeting was held at the Bathurst Street Baptist Church with Saunders presiding. Its purpose was “to form a Society for the purpose of extending the Gospel in connection with the Baptist persuasion, who are, as many people are aware, precluded from participating in the provisions of the Church Act.” The offering received at that first meeting totalled an amazing £100.

Second, Saunders maintained an interest in evangelistic Christian literature and its distribution. He was present at the inaugural meeting of friends and supporters of the Religious Tract Society, held at Mrs Walker’s Room, Parramatta, chaired by Mr H.H. Macarthur, Esq., MC. Saunders moved the third motion, “That this meeting, fully assured of the utter insufficiency of all mere human means to enlighten the mind, renovate the heart, and reform the life, humbly implores the divine blessing to accompany every effort of the Society to benefit the people.” He added that printed tracts in foreign languages would enable Christians

to propagate the Gospel of Christ in regions which the missionaries could not penetrate. By the instrumentality of tracts we might influence the benighted regions of the earth,

and even China itself might participate in the knowledge of Christianity which was shed abroad by them.

Third, Saunders was an active member of the NSW Auxiliary Bible Society. He made what was described as a “very able” speech at its 21st annual general meeting in August 1837, pointing out to the assembled gentry that there were “many persons in the Colony who would rather read the Scriptures, and would be better able to understand them, if they were distributed in the Welsh and Gaelic dialects.”

Fourth, Saunders was deeply committed to support of foreign missions and missionaries. In December 1839, for example, he was present at the first annual meeting of the Australian Auxiliary to the London Missionary Society (LMS), which was held at the Bathurst Street Baptist Church; the Chairman was one Mr McLeay. In a speech, Saunders spoke “very feelingly” on the recent death of John Williams, a missionary in the South Sea Islands, and reiterated the Society’s desire for “increasing pecuniary support of the friends of Christianity in general, in aiding the spread of the Gospel among the Heathen.” Saunders was the Society’s Ministerial Agent in the Colony from 1838 to 1840. He expected the Society to recover the remains of Williams, and to meet the needs of his widow and orphans (sic). Saunders also supported the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and led his people in special services to mark the Jubilee of the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society, forwarding a collection of £50 to the head office. But, as Manley and Petras observe, he advised the BMS that:

You will not expect any annual contribution because we are united with our Independent brethren in supporting the London Missionary Society and we also aid the German Mission to the Aborigines. This we do for love’s sake toward the older congregational body in the colony and because the labour of the LMS are directed toward Polynesia. The German mission is properly Australian.

Wider influence

Looking back after two years of ministry in Sydney, Saunders reflected that on arrival he had felt “unaided and alone.” Yet by 1842, at the age of 36, Saunders had clearly established his personal and professional standing in the community. He was “the leading Baptist of Sydney,” and had become, in the eyes of his peers, the leading Baptist of the Australian colonies. He exercised

influence in Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia, visiting and corresponding with Baptist leaders, and recommending ministers to churches seeking pastoral settlements.

This was a strategic development, indicating his strong personal qualities and broad vision, since at the time NSW Baptists arguably suffered “the burden of minorityhood” with respect to the other Australian colonies, at least until the first decade of the twentieth century. He travelled to Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania) and Port Philip (Melbourne, Victoria) to encourage new Baptist work in those rapidly expanding colonies. He convinced several Baptists to emigrate from Britain to New South Wales. These included his own brother Alfred and his daughter Sarah, James John Glassop (1807-1894), and James Hugh Palmer (1818-1906), all of whom became members of the Bathurst Street church. Glassop had been converted through the open air preaching of John Saunders in London when Saunders was aged 24. Elizabeth Saunders’ sister, Sarah Willox, arrived in 1841 but returned to England at the close of 1847.

In addition to his spiritual ministry, Saunders was deeply committed to social justice or social responsibility, matters addressed in the second half of this paper. Poor health, perhaps intensified by the relatively warm and humid Australian conditions, was his greatest personal impediment. It seems that he suffered from a form of nervous exhaustion. Descriptions of the symptoms are brief and inconclusive, but he may have experienced what we would call burnout. In 1845 he spent some time at Hobart for the “benefit of his declining health, his nervous system having been greatly enfeebled by his long residence in this hot climate.”

Ill health eventually led Saunders to resign from the church at the end of 1847 and return to England early the following year with his wife and daughter Elizabeth (later Lady Renwick), who had been born in Sydney. A few days before their departure, the church arranged a large public farewell at which the NSW Attorney-General, John Hubert Plunkett, Q.C. (1802-1869) presided. Saunders was presented with a substantial gift of £300, accompanied by an address conveying his supporters’ gratitude for his “zealous and persevering services in the cause of temperance, and also of his efforts to promote the intellectual, social and moral well being

of the community.” Sadly, there was no reference to his Baptist work in the associated press report.

Return to England

Saunders was no doubt satisfied with such a conclusion to his ministry in Australia, and relieved at having secured a suitable successor to the pastorate in the person of the Rev John Ham, whom he inducted into the ministry of the Bathurst Street Baptist Church on 2 January 1848. He presented Ham with the Pulpit Bible and Hymn Books, the “Livery of Leisin” of the land granted to the church, and the keys of the building. But his personal reflections on leaving Sydney after 11 years, and his judgment of the worth of his Australian ministry, are lost to history. Back in England, he resumed his legal practice and served as a Baptist minister in several suburban London churches. His daughter Elizabeth attended a ladies’ school kept by Miss Maclaren, the sister of the eminent Baptist preacher and author, the Rev Alexander Maclaren (1826-1910). Saunders retained a strong interest in the colony, and, as death approached, “he hoped he might return to ‘that bright land’ where he should have preferred to have his ‘dust laid’.”

This was not to be, and he died in London on 1 May 1859, leaving his wife destitute. “God alone can tell what will become of us,” she wrote to Australian friends. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, whose first shorthand reporter, James Hugh Palmer (1818-1906), was a member of the Bathurst Street Church during Saunders’ pastorate, and whose proprietor, John Fairfax (1804-1877), had been a strong supporter of Saunders, immediately opened a subscription list and sent her £650. They remained in England until Elizabeth turned 17, then returned to Sydney, where in 1868 Elizabeth jr married (later Sir) Arthur Renwick (1837-1908), the famous Glasgow-born doctor, politician and philanthropist whom John Saunders had known during his time in Sydney.

The Rev Rod Benson is an ethicist and public theologian with the Tinsley Institute, an activity of Morling College, Sydney. Rod also serves as Secretary of the Baptist Historical Society.

ENDNOTES

1. *The Australian Baptist*, 3 Aug 1960; “Official Opening ‘Camp Saunders Chapel,’ Sunday 15th September 1963,” in *Minute Book of BUNSW Annual Assembly and Executive Committee (11 Sep 1958-17 Sep 1963)*, p.

- 501; Baptist Union of NSW *Handbook* 1997-98 (Glebe: BUNSW, 1997), p. 34. When opened, Camp Saunders replaced a previous "Rostherne" campsite used by Baptists at Port Hacking. The two sites were sold in 1990 and the funds were used to purchase the Kiah Ridge camping site at Tahmoor.
2. "Official Program of the Centenary Assembly of the Baptist Union of N.S.W., September 19-26, 1968," attached to p. 501 in *Minute Book of BUNSW Annual Assembly and Executive Committee (15 Sep 1964-26 Sep 1968)*, pp. 14-16.
 3. See Jill Sutton (ed.), *Rev John Saunders: a beacon light and some Baptist reflections* (Canberra: Baptist Union of Australia, 2001).
 4. *Summa Supremo* (Morling College quarterly newsletter), Oct 2001.
 5. Aware of the significant contribution by John Saunders not only to the early development of the Baptist denomination in NSW but also to the wider community through his interest in benevolence and social justice, I encouraged the Social Issues Committee of the Baptist Union of NSW to consider an appropriate and ongoing form of recognition in 2006. As a result, in February 2007 the Social Issues Committee resolved to launch "The John Saunders Forum," a series of occasional lectures addressing social and ethical issues from an evangelical Christian perspective to commence in late 2007 or early 2008. Due to changes in the membership and activities of the SIC, this initiative was not implemented until May 2008, when the inaugural John Saunders Forum address was presented by the author.
 6. J.D. Bollen, "English-Australian Baptist relations 1830-1860," *The Baptist Quarterly* 25 (7), July 1974, pp. 292-293.
 7. B.G. Wright, "Saunders, John (1806-1859)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (vol. 2; Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967), p. 418, available at <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020373b.htm>.
 8. Elizabeth was the daughter of Lieutenant William Willox of the Royal Artillery, Woolwich and Fort St George, and was, according to her granddaughter E.M.W. Renwick, "always more or less of an invalid." She died at Clarendon House, Sydney, in 1878. See E.M.W. Renwick, "Rev John Saunders," *The Australian Baptist*, 12 Jan 1937, p. 5.
 9. *The Sydney Herald*, 4 December 1834, p. 2. The Rev Mr Saunders" tops the free passenger list.
 10. Ken R. Manley & Michael J. Petras, *The First Australian Baptists* (Eastwood, NSW: Baptist Historical Society of NSW, 1981), p. 63.
 11. Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, p. 69.
 12. Letter dated 26 January 1835, Saunders Letterbook, ML MSS B 1106.
 13. Renwick, "Rev. John Saunders."
 14. *The Sydney Herald*, 30 July 1835, p. 1; also 6 Aug 1835, p. 1; 10 Aug 1835, p. 1, etc.
 15. Church Records, Resolutions at Meetings, 17 November 1836, ML MSS 3240, box MLK 240.
 16. Ken R. Manley, *In the Heart of Sydney: Central Baptist Church 1836-1986* (Glebe, NSW: Australian Baptist Publishing House, 1987), p. 19.
 17. John Saunders, "Invitation to fellowship: A sermon, preached at the Baptist Chapel, Bathurst Street, on the Lord's Day, 7th August 1842, by John Saunders" (Sydney: Kemp & Fairfax, 1842), pp. 3-4.
 18. Heather Vose, "Australian Baptists in the 19th century," in Michael Petras (ed.), *Australian Baptists Past and Present* (Eastwood, NSW: Baptist Historical Society of NSW, 1988), pp. 11-12.
 19. Cited in J.D. Bollen, *Australian Baptists: A Religious Minority* (London: Baptist Historical Society, 1975), p. 10. The words derive from the text of Saunders' sermon, "Invitation to fellowship," p. 14 (see below for full reference).
 20. Murray, *Australian Christian Life from 1788*, p. 116.
 21. Manley, *In the Heart of the City*, p. 20.
 22. Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, p. 79.
 23. *A Century of Baptist Witness in Sydney: The story of the Bathurst Street Church, 1836-1937* (privately published, 1937), p. 7.
 24. On Saunders and his support for church planting see Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, pp. 83-89.
 25. Letter from John Saunders to Miss Saunders, 26 Jan 1835, in Letter Book, MS B1106, Mitchell Library.
 26. Ibid.
 27. *Victorian Baptist Magazine*, June 1869.
 28. Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, p. 91.
 29. Murray, *Australian Christian Life from 1788*, p. 116.
 30. Rev John Saunders, "Invitation to fellowship: A sermon, preached at the Baptist Chapel, Bathurst Street, on the Lord's Day, 7th August 1842, by John Saunders" (Sydney: Kemp & Fairfax, 1842). The transcript of the sermon is supported by a large number of (mostly New Testament) references displayed as footnotes. Inscribed at the top of the front page of my copy are the words, "To the well beloved George Washington Walker, Esq., from the Preacher." Washington (1800-1859) was the son of a Parisian Unitarian who married a Quaker and arrived in Australia in about 1831. In 1834 he settled in Hobart where he worked as a draper and opened a savings bank. Like Saunders, Washington's social concerns included temperance, education, penal reform, destitute women and the treatment of the Aborigines. See the anonymous article titled "George Washington Walker," available at http://www.utas.edu.au/library/exhibitions/quaker/quaker_biographies/quaker_biog_g..., n.d., found on 3 Jul 2007.
 31. Saunders, "Invitation to fellowship," p. 3.
 32. Ibid., p. 6.
 33. Ibid., p. 11. He also quotes the Nineteenth Article of the Westminster Confession at this point.
 34. Ibid., p. 12.
 35. Ibid., p. 13.
 36. Ibid., p. 14.
 37. Ibid.
 38. Ibid., p. 18.

39. Ibid., pp. 20-21.
40. Ibid., p. 21.
41. Ibid., p. 22.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., pp. 23-24.
44. Ibid., p. 24.
45. Ibid., p. 25.
46. Ibid., p. 26. Both common spellings of “baptised” used in the transcript.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., pp. 28-33.
49. Ibid., pp. 31-32.
50. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
51. Ibid., p. 21.
52. Ibid., p. 22.
53. *Sydney Herald*, 11 October 1839, p. 2.
54. *Sydney Herald*, 27 January 1841, p. 2.
55. *Sydney Herald*, 21 December 1840, p. 2.
56. *Sydney Herald*, 22 October 1840, p. 2.
57. *Sydney Herald*, August 1837, p. 2. The newspaper report of that meeting demonstrates Saunders’ fine wit.
58. *Sydney Herald*, 23 December 1839, p. 2.
59. Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, p. 57.
60. *The Baptist Magazine* (1836), p. 114. This was a British publication.
61. Ken R. Manley, *Woolloomooloo to ‘Eternity’: A History of Australian Baptists. Volume 1: Growing an Australian Church (1831-1914)* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2006), p. 9.
62. Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, p. 91.
63. Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, p. 68. The Iliffe thesis (see next footnote) refers to Alfred Saunders and his daughter Sarah; p. 29.
64. Narelle Rosevear Iliffe, “The first fruits: Baptists in New South Wales to about the 1850s,” MLitt thesis, University of New England, Armidale, 1997, p. 29.
65. Manley, *In the Heart of Sydney*, p. 26.
66. A son, born before Elizabeth, died at birth.
67. *A Century of Baptist Witness in Sydney*, p. 10.
68. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 Dec 1847.
69. Manley, *In the Heart of Sydney*, p. 26.
70. Renwick, “Rev. John Saunders.”
71. Ibid.
72. Manley & Petras, *The First Australian Baptists*, p. 61.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMISTICE.

The Society Committee is planning a major event in November to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the WW1 Armistice and will major on Baptists in that ghastly event, or as Professor Bob Linder called it in his book: *The Long Tragedy*. Planning is only preliminary yet but it is likely that the meeting will be a major event so there will be a refreshment break and therefore bookings will be necessary (the cost will not be a major problem but numbers for catering must be anticipated). Please note that this meeting will **not** be on Thursday the 6th November as would be the normal date but on **Tuesday the 11th** – the reason for that will be obvious. Our Treasurer, Mr Michael Petras will be the main feature along with Professor Bob Linder from Kansas State University in the USA – who is coming here especially for this meeting. Both these speakers have special interest in this subject and especially so as they have an unusually wide grasp of that war as it affected Baptists.

More detail closer to the time.

Baptist Historical Society Report for 2008 White Book

The Baptist Historical Society provides a range of services to Baptists in NSW and the ACT. Its objectives are:

- To encourage research on Baptist people, places, institutions, products and events, especially those related to NSW and the ACT;
- To obtain custody of Baptist historical records and to facilitate the careful documentation and preservation of Baptist history;
- To publish articles, papers, books and other media on Baptist history;
- To foster interest in Baptist history among local churches and to assist in the preparation and celebration of significant anniversaries;
- To assist researchers at schools, colleges and universities;

To promote the care of buildings and sites of historical interest to Baptists.

A new Constitution was adopted on 7 February 2008. The Society meets quarterly at Morling College and arranges regular lecture program.

In August 2007, Mr Andrew Lane presented an address on NSW Baptist hymnody and eschatology. Andrew is the recently appointed Registrar of Morling College, and the son of the Rev. John Lane, current President of the Baptist Union of Queensland.

In November 2007 the Society held a successful event, "Singing the hymns of the Second Coming," coordinated by Andrew Lane and Ron Robb.

In February 2008, Mr Michael Petras presented an address on the life and times of the Rev William Lamb (1868-1944), a prominent NSW Baptist minister perhaps best known for his strong premillennial convictions and his editorship of the *Advent Herald* from 1920-1944. Also at the February meeting, Mr F.J. Ridley Smith, the son of the late Rev Fred (China) Smith, generously donated various items of historical interest to the Baptist Archives, including a large oil painting of the Rev John G. Ridley based on a famous photograph of the eminent NSW Baptist evangelist and Bible teacher. The Rev Fred Smith was a former missionary with China Inland Mission, interned by the Chinese communists, and a NSW Baptist minister. As a young man, he was a protégé of the Rev John Ridley. The painting now hangs in the corridor outside the Principal's office at Morling College.

In May 2008, the Society joined with the Social Issues Committee of the Baptist Union of NSW to launch the John Saunders Forum, an initiative of the SIC. On the evening, Rev. Rod Benson presented a paper on the life and ministry of the Rev. John Saunders, the first official Baptist minister in NSW (1834-1847). Two of Saunders' descendants were present, and various rare archival memorabilia were on display. The Society publishes a quarterly journal, *The Baptist Recorder*, edited by Rev. Dr Graeme Chatfield, which usually features transcripts of the quarterly addresses and other articles and information of interest.

During the next few months we expect to launch a new website and several important publishing projects including a new edition of *The First Australian Baptists* (the first edition was written by Ken Manley and Michael Petras and published as our second booklet in 1981). Plans are underway to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade, and the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of Baptist World Aid Australia. Details of upcoming events are available in *The Baptist Recorder*, or on our Facebook group, "Baptist Historical Society" (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=17097794054>), or by contacting one of the Society's executive.

The Society is privileged to have ready access to the excellent Baptist Archives at Morling College, and the outstanding services of the Honorary Archivist, Mr Ron Robb, and his voluntary assistants, whose ability to organise and locate information is indispensable. Current officers of the Society are Rev. Bruce Thornton OAM (President), Mrs Janine Prior (Vice President), Rev Rod Benson (Secretary), Mr Michael Petras (Treasurer), Mr Ron Robb (Honorary Archivist), and Rev. Dr Graeme Chatfield (Editor, *The Baptist Recorder*). Mr John Boston serves as the Society's auditor.

The members of the Society were deeply saddened to learn of the passing away of Mr Phil Hayward, our long-term Treasurer, in March. Phil was a fine administrator and an extraordinarily hard worker. Our prayers and good wishes are extended to Phil's wife Bess and the family. A biographical note on Phil's life and achievements was published in the May issue of *The Baptist Recorder*.

The Society is grateful to the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT and the Baptist Insurance Management for their financial support, and to Morling College for providing excellent archival facilities, administrative support, and access to library resources.

The Society welcomes new members, and enquiries from any person or church who has records relating to the history of Baptist ministry and mission in and through our churches, and any records (including sermons) of NSW & ACT Baptist ministers and lay leaders (women and men). For more information, or to join the Baptist Historical Society, please contact the Secretary at Morling College, 120 Herring Rd, Eastwood 2122, phone (02) 9878 0201, or email RodB@morling.edu.au. For information on specific research or care of archival records, please contact the Archivist at 35 Tucks Rd, Toongabbie 2146, phone (02) 9636 7330, or email gloron@optusnet.com.au.

Rod Benson
Secretary
Baptist Historical Society

Financial Statement for the Baptist Historical Society of NSW for the period 1 March to 30 June 2008

General Fund			
		Receipts	Payments
1 March	Balance b/f	14,519-84	
	Membership Fees	715-00	Stamps 50-00
	Donations	160-00	
	Investment Interest	510-51	
			Balance c/d 15,855-35
		Total - \$ 15,905-35	Total - \$15,905-35
1 July	Balance c/f	\$15,855-35	

Michael Petras

OBITUARY – ‘THE HYMNAL’ COMPILER JOINS THE HEAVENLY CHOIR

The Rev. Donald Crowhurst died of kidney failure in Canada on the 14th May last. He will forever be known not only as a popular and effective pastor but perhaps even more widely as the compiler of ‘The Hymnal’ which effectively became the Australian Baptist hymn book (although used by other denominations too). Although first published in 1967 it went through some ten reprints up into the mid 1980s and is still used in many churches today. It was printed only in music editions as Don wanted all congregations to know the possibility of good harmonised congregational singing.

Don was born on 19th April, 1927 in Newcastle, NSW, to Frederick and Mary Crowhurst. He was the mid sibling between sister June and brother Maurice, both of who predeceased him (Maurice 2006 and June 2007). The family moved to Dulwich Hill where Don went to school and, with the rest of the family, became active in the Dulwich Hill Baptist Church. He graduated from the Sydney Boys High School with the Leaving Certificate (now he HSC) with assessments rated at least ‘superior’. It was noted that his interests were a number of sports, church activities and reading – mostly theology and scriptural. Don became involved in open-air preaching as a young student. Fred Crowhurst was in the building trade and for a while the family lived in Broken Hill but returned to Sydney where Don joined the PMG and became telegram boy. He was called-up for War service and joined the Air Force. After the War he joined the firm of William Buckingham – Mr Buckingham being a well known Baptist and also assisted his Dad in the building business.

In 1946 Don was accepted for ministerial training and entered the NSW Baptist Theological College at Ashfield. His student experiences were in the churches at The Entrance, Drummoyne and Gymea (then known as Hotham Road). In 1953 he married Marion Lawson of Wollongong. Sadly, that marriage did not last.

After graduation and ordination, Don served as the Pastor at Taree for 1952-57. He and Marion then went to Fort Worth Seminary, USA, where he studied music and religious education during 1958-60. On return to Australia he pastored the Lakemba church, 1960-63, then the Auburn church 1963-68. He had a notable ministry at Auburn and was involved with the ‘Bring out a Briton’ migrant scheme which was popular in Baptist Churches at that time. The Missouri-Australia mission and the Pan-Australian mission took place during his time



at Auburn and a Sunday morning church service was televised during his pastorate. One especially significant activity which was begun and brought to full fruition during this period was the publishing of ‘The Hymnal’, which received a major review by the Rev, Neil Adcock in the 25th

October 1967 edition of ‘The Australian Baptist’. Don was succeeded by the Rev. Alan Neate, one of his Theological College class - and a member of this Society. Alan recalls that Don was a superb wood craftsman, a skill no doubt inherited from his father.

In 1968 Don and Marion accepted a call to minister in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. He had at that stage intended to return to Australia and was in fact still carried in the List of Accredited minister in the NSW Baptist Year Books until 1972 when his credentials were transferred to Western Canada. Later, he pastored the St Johns United Church in Vancouver where he assisted in the installation of a new organ. However, the Canadian United denomination began to move in a different theological direction and Don felt obliged to resign (along with many others, apparently). He then moved to the Reformed Church in Athabaska, North of Edmonton, Alberta. Here, he was first diagnosed with cancer in one of his kidneys. However, with the removal of that kidney he returned to good health.

In retirement, Don became interested in gemology and eventually graduated from the Institute of Gemology at Santa Monica. He still continued preaching. His gemstone interest took him to Asia and back to Australia for opals, sapphire and rubies. He frequently revisited Australia and in fact celebrated his 70th birthday in the Taree Baptist Church Hall where many old friends from many places were present..

Don’s last few years were spent with his son, Dr Brenton Crowhurst and family. However, his remaining kidney was failing and he began to lose the battle and eventually a memorial service was held in his former Athabasca church to honour his memory. He has left this life for a better one but his memory is commemorated in song every Sunday in many churches by two generations further on in time who probably have never heard of Don Crowhurst. He left this world a better place than when he first entered it.

The input of a significant element of this obituary by Mrs Val Crowhurst, sister-in-law to Don Crowhurst is gratefully acknowledged.

Other content is from the Baptist Archives.

IN THE ARCHIVES

The Archives is facing an embarrassment of riches at present since the new (old) material flow continues and space is beginning to become a serious threat. Morling College has generously provided a small spare room as an annex but this will stave-off the evil day for only a short while. A nice problem to have but we have to solve it soon.

Staff

We have sadly had to farewell Miss Ruth Court from the volunteer team since she felt that the time had come to retire. We thus have space for a new member and if there is anybody who would like to enquire what the job entails please see the Archivist. *We are really badly in need of a competent computer manager.* Ernie Windschuttle originally came to us for that purpose but the College soon found out that he is an outstandingly competent IT manager and they won him from us as an employee of the College nearly full-time. Volunteers are covered by Voluntary Workers insurance and lunch is provided each day when on duty. The area is a pleasant place to work (it's always a fine day in the Archives) and it surprises people to find how interesting the job is; some of our team actually take work home because it does tend to 'get one in'.

Training

The Archivist has just completed a short certificate course at the University of NSW on the establishment of the provenance and the management of archival documents. This course is conducted annually by Professor Peter Orlovitch who assisted us to establish the current Archives when we set it up nearly ten years ago (and how fast that time has gone!). We've invited him to give us a short 'audit' a couple of times and given that the staff are all part-time volunteer non-professionals he has given us a reasonably 'good housekeeping seal of approval'. We thank the Baptist Insurance Association for providing the major share of the funding for this course – it was not cheap.

Equipment

We thank Baptist Community Services for providing an update of our computers. Most work stations now have a terminal and the next task is to update the printers. However, we need that computer manager already noted above!

Church Histories

The Carlingford Baptist Church is to launch its golden jubilee history on the 9th of August. The Society has been involved with Mrs Irene McKilligan, the author, and the work promises to be an excellent publication. The Rev. Dr Vic Eldridge has provided a review of the book elsewhere in this edition of our journal. Those who would like to attend the launch could note that it will be in the Carlingford Church at 4.00 pm and afternoon tea will follow.

The Wallsend Baptist Church is preparing for its sesquicentenary and has wisely begun planning well ahead (the date is 2013). Initial discussions re ways we can assist with the project will have taken place by the time of the Society meeting on Thursday 7th August.

Recovered History

How many people know where Barmedman is? It's part of the Riverina/South West region, not far from places like Aria Park, Wagga Wagga, Temora and Griffith. You could be forgiven for not knowing – it's the kind of place where by the time you've taken your foot off the accelerator to slow down for the speed restriction it's time to start picking-up speed again; barely even a small village. Nevertheless, there was once a Baptist Church there. It has long since disappeared and was fast fading from memory. But - we recently discovered a little treasure amongst some old papers: an excellent photo in good condition.

WHAT MADE THEM MORLING'S MEN?

What was it about the theological training of men at the NSW Baptist Theological College under the Principalship of GH Morling that saw the graduates so willingly name themselves Morling's Men? Explore this and other related questions about the nature of theological training at the Baptist Theological College of NSW between 1936-1960

7 August

7.30pm

Morling College

The paper to be presented by Rev Dr Graeme Chatfield

Purpose and Passion

by Irene McKilligan

In 1959 a tent was erected on a piece of land on the corner of Alamein and Pennant Hills Rd Carlingford. When one of the local lads was invited to go to the new Sunday School it was the idea of going to Sunday School in a tent that attracted him. Years later he served as the secretary of the church.

This is just one of the stories contained in Irene McKilligan's history of the Carlingford Baptist Church titled "Purpose and Passion." The book has been written to celebrate the church's fiftieth anniversary and is an excellent presentation of the church's history. A daughter church of the Epping congregation and only about 5 kilometres from the mother church, Carlingford in the 1950's was a rapidly expanding residential area. The church's early growth was dramatic, building its own worship centre and manse and calling its first full time minister in 1963 after only four years of ministry by student pastors. By the middle 1980's the membership had reached over 400.

McKilligan has divided the story into five sections titled **Beginnings**, **Growth**, **Maturity**, **Change** and **Challenge**. **Beginnings** traces the first four years of the church's ministry under three student pastors, Garth Manning, John Strugnell and Neville Davies. **Growth** covers the next eleven years as the church and district grew together and the original church building was replaced by the present centre. Vic Eldridge and Denis Johnston were the first two full time pastors. **Maturity** covers the eleven years pastorate of John Robinson, a period when the church reached its zenith in terms of numbers. **Change** covers the years from 1986 to 2001 as the district changed in nature and the effect of that change on the church. Vic Eldridge returned for a second ministry followed by Bob Smith. **Challenge** tells the current story of the church as it faces a new century under the leadership of Phil Waugh.

This is a very readable history of a modern Baptist church and its struggles and triumphs. The author has researched the half century very thoroughly including a great deal of oral history from past and present members. It is no idealised portrayal of people and events but a realistic and honest attempt to tell the story of what God has done through one small branch of his church. While it will be of special interest to those who have had some past or present connection with the church, it is well worth reading by anyone who has an interest in local and church history. In her first foray in the field of history writing Irene McKilligan has produced a work of which she and the church can be justly proud.

The Baptist Recorder

*The Journal of the Baptist Historical
Society of New South Wales*

Baptist Historical Society of NSW

**Preserving, promoting and publishing
NSW Baptist history**

President: Rev Bruce Thornton
Vice President—Janine Prior
Secretary: Rev Rod Benson
Treasurer: Mr Michael Petras
Editor: Rev Dr Graeme Chatfield
Archivist: Mr Ron Robb

Archives

Phone: (02) 9878 0201
Fax: (02) 9878 2175

Recorder

Email: graemecworking@optusnet.com.au

COMING EVENTS OF THE SOCIETY

Society Meeting Dates for 2008

7 February — Mr Michael Petras concludes our exploration of Second Coming teaching among NSW Baptists by exploring the teaching and influence of Rev William Lamb, one time pastor of the Burton St Baptist Church.

1 May — Mr Rod Benson will explore the contribution of Rev John Saunders to the establishment of NSW Baptists, with particular reference to his stand on moral and ethical issues of his time.

7 August — Rev Dr Graeme Chatfield will continue to explore the various approaches to theological education among NSW Baptists focusing on the later Morning years.

TUESDAY 11 November— Mr Michael Petras & Professor Robert Linder - Australian Baptists and the End of the Great War. A special meeting to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Armistice.
